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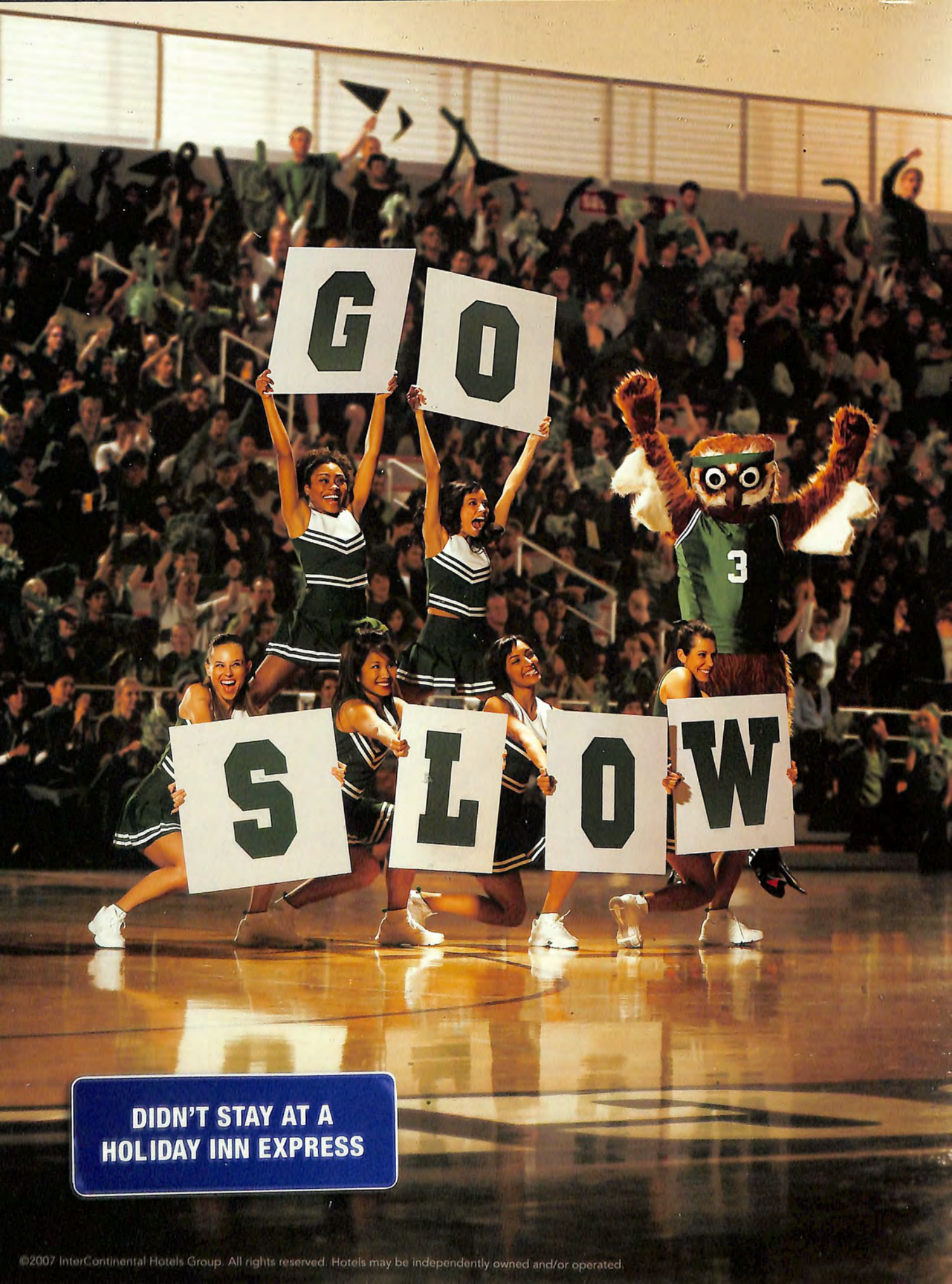

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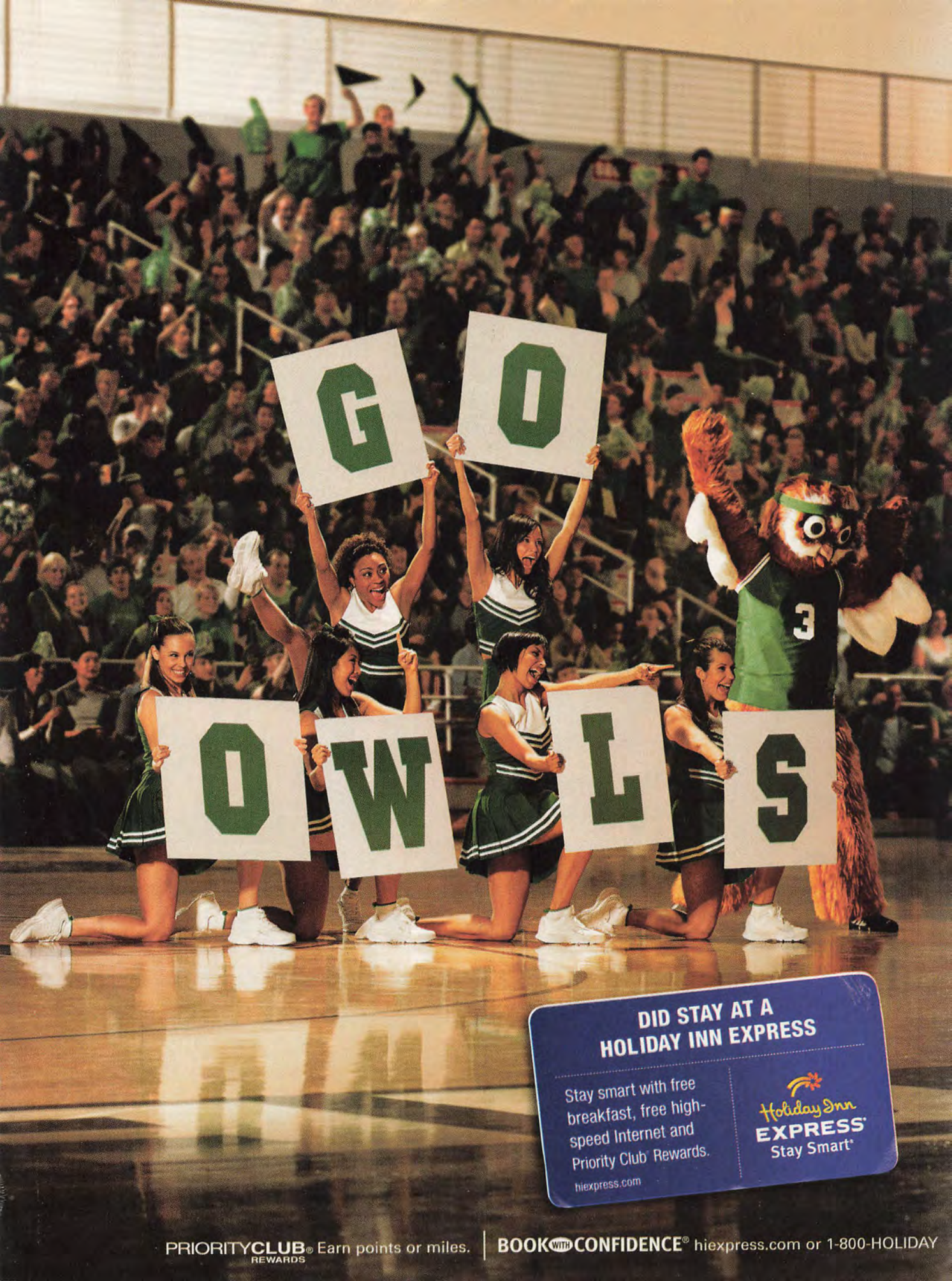

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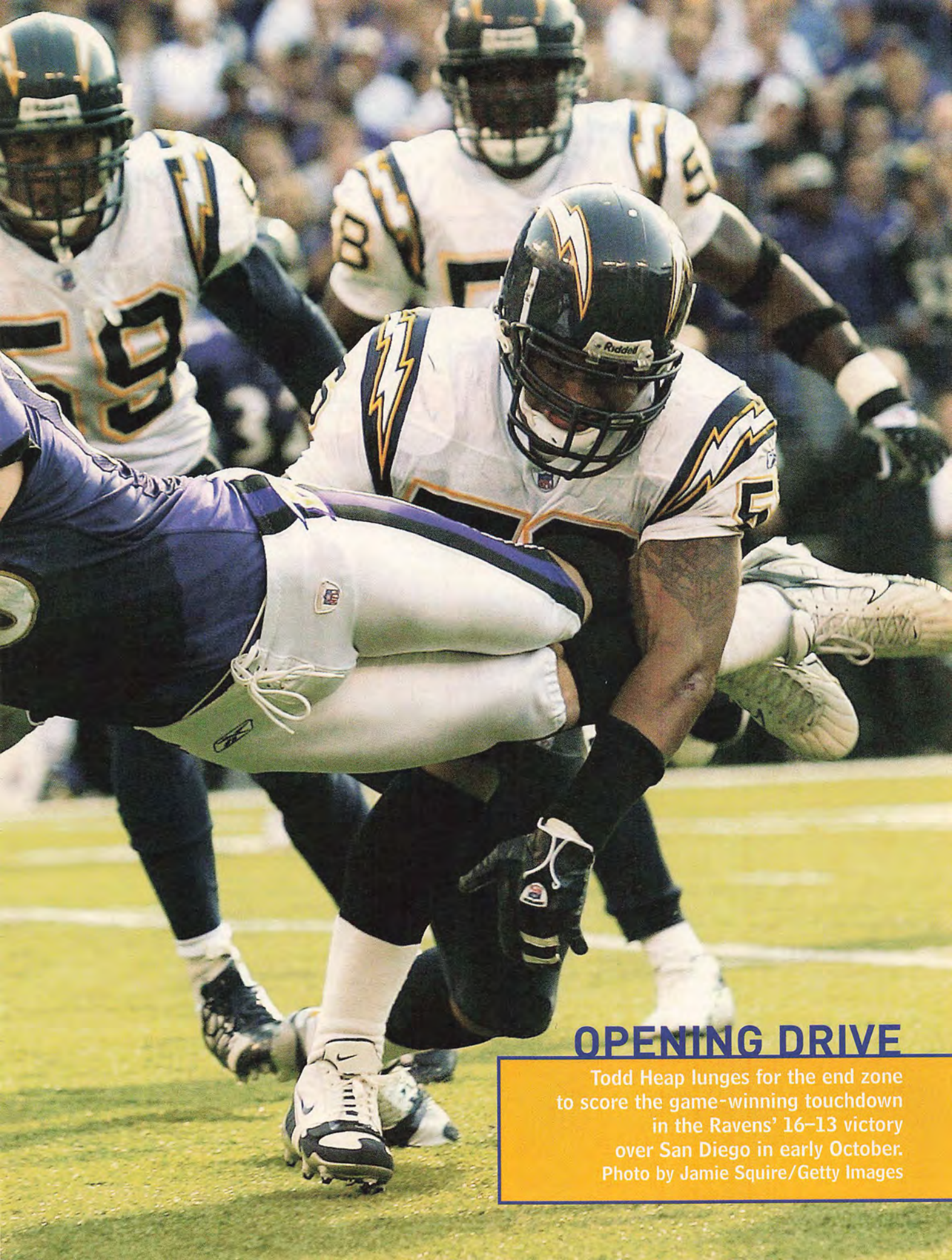

OPENING DRIVE

Todd Heap lunges for the end zone to score the game-winning touchdown in the Ravens' 16–13 victory over San Diego in early October.
Photo by Jamie Squire/Getty Images

EDITOR'S LETTER

You're holding the 26th edition of Athlon Sports' Pro Football magazine. I've been here for 10 of them. But there's a more significant anniversary that I'd like to mention. Forty years ago, Athlon Sports was born when a college student named Jerry McCoin made the bold decision to publish a Southeastern Conference preview. During the ensuing 40 years, Athlon Sports has grown to include 16 different annuals covering everything from college and pro football to racing to golf. Last year, we added Fantasy Football to our arsenal, and earlier this year, we launched our annual NFL Draft preview.

One thing that's grown right along with our company is our commitment to inform and entertain you, our readers. We know that we make the long, hot summers a little more tolerable by giving you this early-June football fix. It's a responsibility that Athlon Sports has taken very seriously for 40 years now.

Anyway, on to this year's magazine …

When I was a kid, the Oakland Raiders were the team I loved to hate. In contrast to my favorite team at the time, the (seemingly) squeaky-clean Dallas Cowboys, the Raiders were the Darth Vaders of the NFL — clad in black and bent on domination, no matter what means they used to achieve it. (Remember the Holy Roller? If not, ask your dad, especially if he was a Raider-hater like I was.)

That hatred gave way to grudging respect in the 1984 Super Bowl, when Marcus Allen and the Raiders dismantled a favored group of Redskins, 38–9, for the franchise's third Super Bowl victory. Highlighted by Allen's graceful, dazzling 74-yard touchdown run, that performance represented the high-water mark of the Raider Nation and its "Commitment to Excellence."

Today, 23-plus years later, the glory days are a fading memory. "Just win, baby" has been replaced by "Just try not to embarrass us out there." Presiding over this startling decline is the man in dark glasses and bright warm-ups, managing general partner Al Davis, who despite his advancing age vows to fix what ails this proud franchise. Can he do it? Can the Raiders recapture the magic that led them to dub themselves "the Team of the Decades"? Find out in our story "Silver and Bleak" on page 38. I must admit — part of me is rooting for a Raider renaissance. The NFL is more interesting when the Raiders are relevant.

Of course, the Raiders were pretty relevant this past April. Having the top pick in the NFL Draft — aside from being a poor reflection on the season you just had — places you in the national spotlight, as armchair Mel Kipers across the country debate and deconstruct your proper course of action. Such is the influence and impact of the draft, which has eclipsed the season itself for Draftniks in importance.

For a team like Oakland, the draft also represents an opportunity for a quick fix. Did the Raiders achieve that with their selection of JaMarcus Russell? Yes, we know he can throw the ball 70 yards from his knees while blindfolded and being attacked by wild dogs — not that there's much call for that sort of thing under game conditions. Check out our analysis of this year's draft on page 208 to see how your team fared.

If you need evidence that the NFL is a me-too league, look no further than the proliferation of the Cover 2 defense. This flavor-of-the-month defense actually has its roots in the 1970s Pittsburgh Steel Curtain, but coordinators are discovering that it works against today's offensive schemes. Michael Bradley breaks down the Cover 2 and analyzes its appeal on page 30.

As always, there's no shortage of compelling storylines heading into the 2007 season. We've picked 13 of them to dissect in some detail. Vito Stellino tells us what to expect in his story "13 Things to Watch" on page 24.

As we embark on our fifth decade as a company, we want to hear from you. What can we do better? Email us at editor@athlonsports.com with your ideas. And check out our website, athlonsports.com, throughout the summer for previews, updates, podcasts and much more.

Enjoy the magazine, and enjoy the season.

Rob Doster

Rob Doster, Senior Editor

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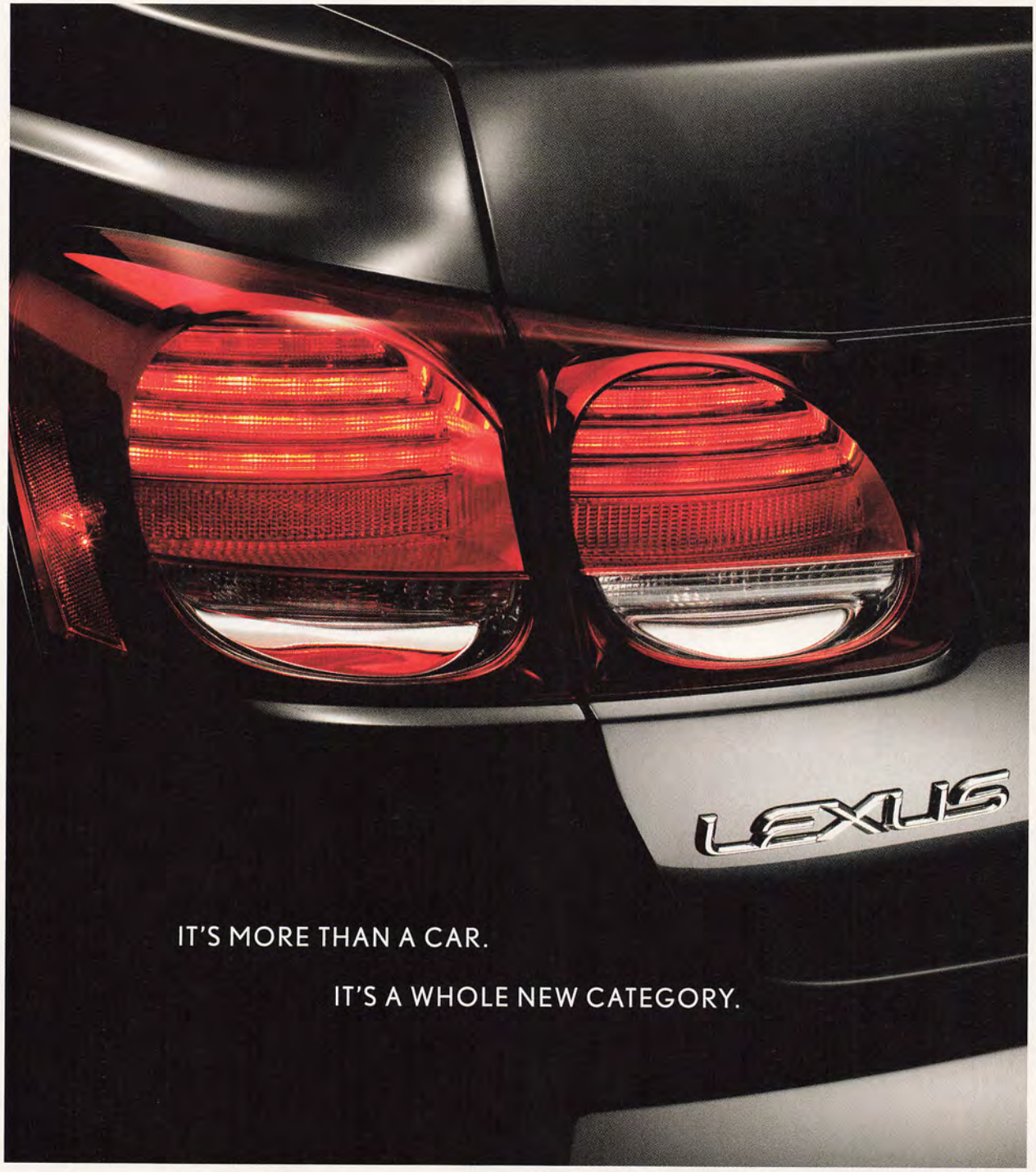

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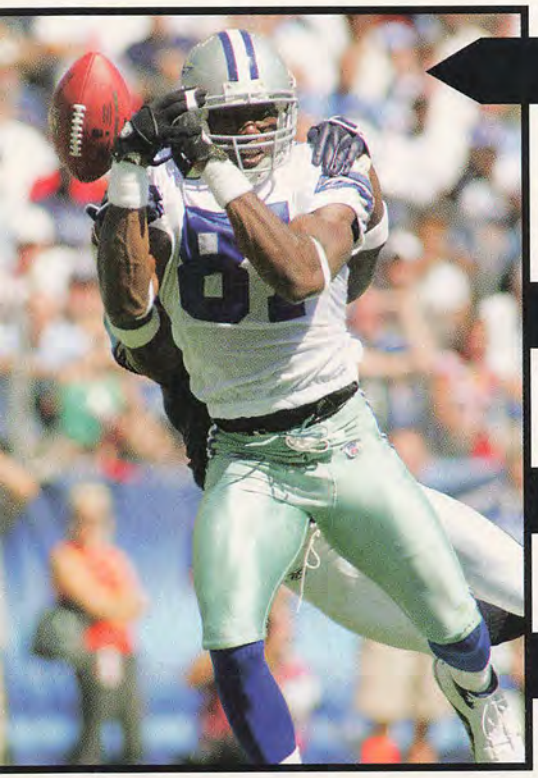

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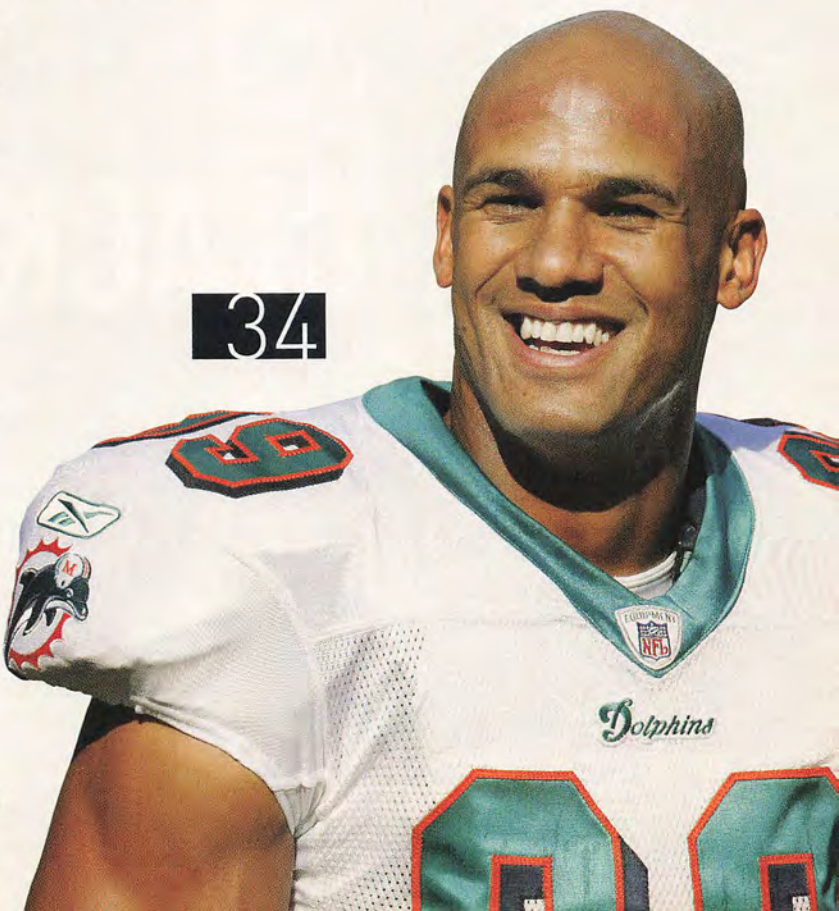

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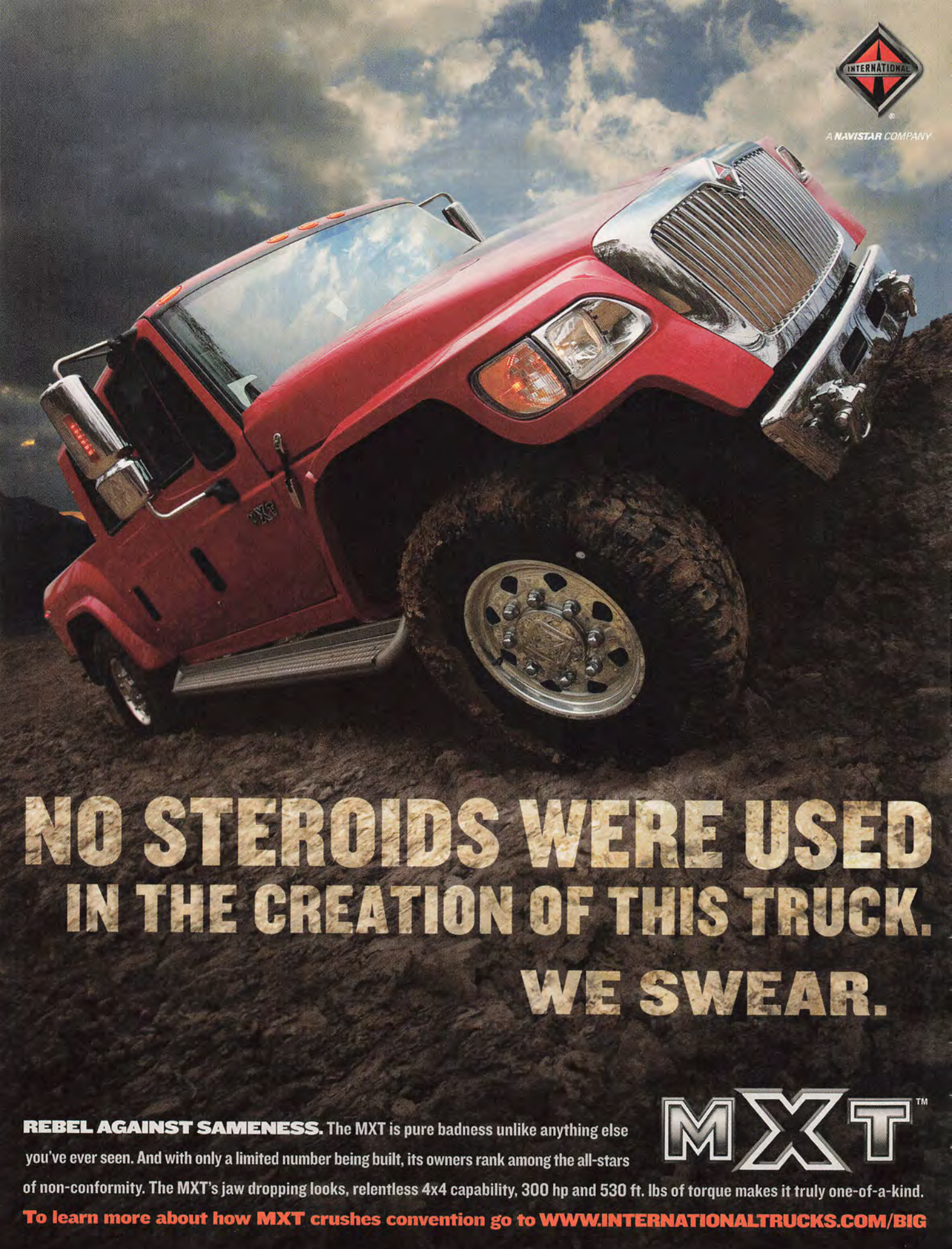
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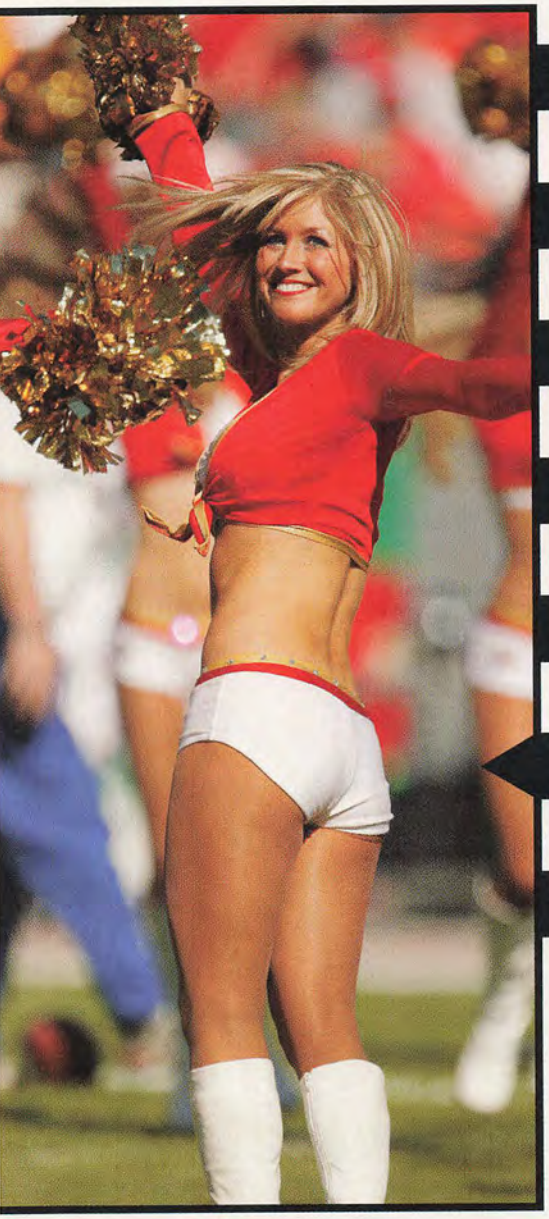

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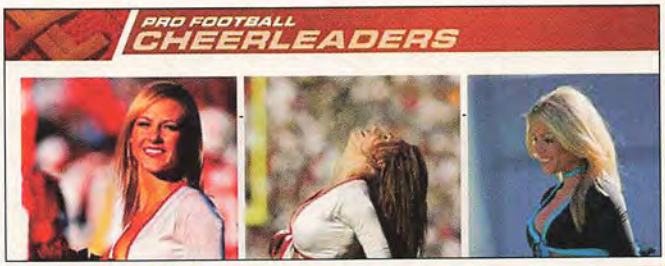

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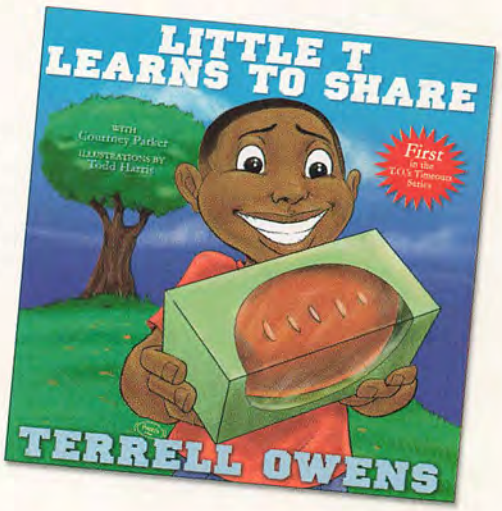
EXTRAPOINTS

by Bruce Herman

WHAT'S NEXT, PACMAN LEARNS TO STAY HOME?

Looking for a Christmas gift for your tiniest tailback that both exposes him to football and teaches a life lesson? How about the new book, *Little T Learns to Share*? According to the Amazon.com description, "Little T is a boy who doesn't want to share his new football … When he tries to play by himself, however, he realizes that football isn't any fun alone." Who better to teach this lesson to your child than the author, one Terrell Owens? And you'll also want to pick up the next two volumes in his series — and these titles are real — the just-released *Little T Learns What Not to Say* and the upcoming *Little T Learns to Say I'm Sorry.*



OVERHEARD

"Terrell Owens is not better than me.
Keyshawn Johnson is not better than me.
Randy Moss is not better than me.
The only person better than me is me."

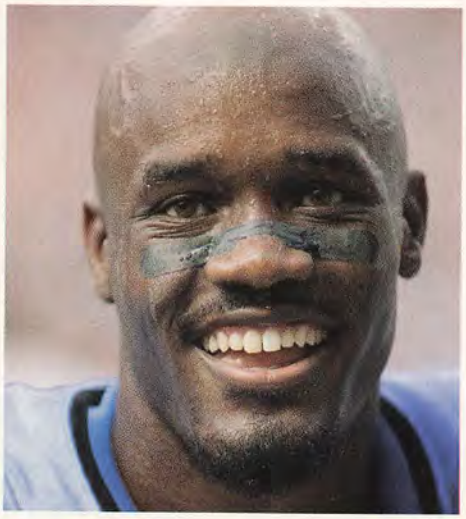
— WR David Terrell in April 2006, who then went on to catch zero passes for the second consecutive season.

PIGSKIN POLL

Each September, Harris Interactive conducts a poll about attitudes toward the NFL. In 2006, the Steelers — fresh off their Super Bowl win — overtook the Packers as the favorite team among U.S. adults who follow football. For the third straight year, the Cowboys were second. The Colts checked in at No. 3, followed by Green Bay and New England. Apparently these were no casual fans, either. Harris also asked them to predict the Super Bowl winner. Though the season was only three weeks old at the time, the most-favored team was Indy. A few other nuggets:

- 62 percent of men follow the game, compared to 34 percent of women.
- Interest in the NFL has declined from its peak of 55 percent of all adults in 1998 to 48 percent of all adults in the latest Harris Interactive poll.
- People under 30 are far less likely to follow the NFL than those age 30-60.
- Interest among whites and African-Americans is about equal.
- Republicans like football better than Democrats.

Source: HarrisInteractive.com



NO-WIN SITUATION

If it's all about winning and losing, Roy Williams didn't get the memo. In Week 2 last year, the Lions' swaggering wideout struck a flamboyant pose after catching a four-yard "bomb" against the Bears. Which would have been no big deal had his team not been getting plastered 24–0 at the time. Queried about it afterwards, he replied,

"What does that mean? … That means nothing to me. The score means nothing … I'm an exciting player."

Three months later, after a loss to New England, Williams was still feeling it. "Look, we're 2–10," he informed reporters. "It's a good 2–10."

SCHEDULE STUFF

TOUGHEST START

Cleveland hosts three division opponents in the first four weeks, then visits New England.

EASIEST START

Pittsburgh sees neither Cincinnati nor Baltimore until Week 8.

TOUGHEST FINISH

In December, Seattle plays three games in the East and entertains Baltimore and Arizona.

EASIEST FINISH

San Francisco closes with three home games and a trip to Cleveland.

TOUGHEST STRETCH

San Francisco plays five of seven on the road, including three in the East, after a Week 6 bye.

PRIMETIME SURPRISE

The Bills welcome Dallas in Week 5 for their first MNF game since 2000, and their first at home since 1994.

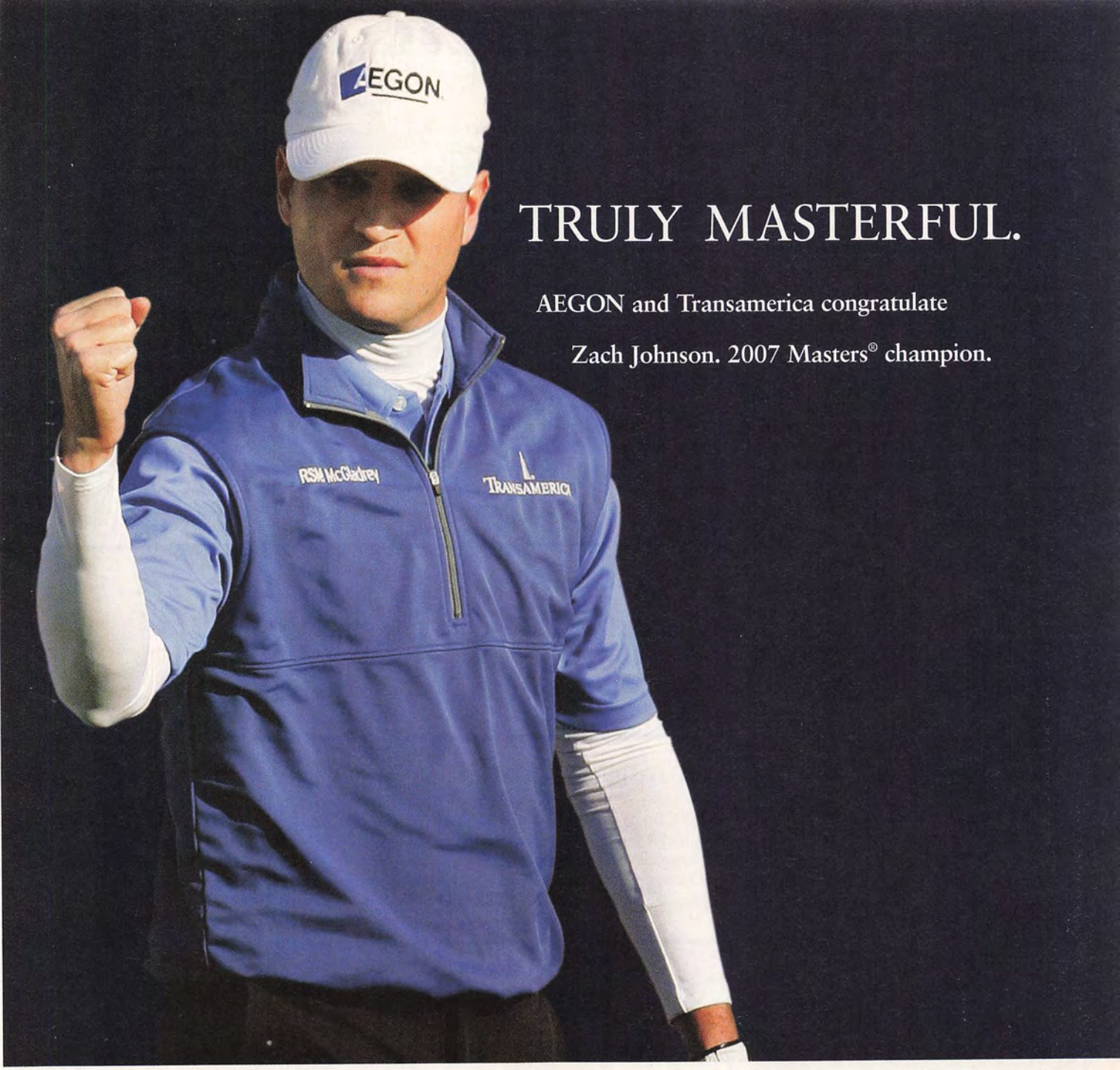
PRIMETIME PREJUDICE

The 8–8 Giants get five prime time TV appearances plus a game in London, while the 10–6 Jets get just one.

STRANGEST SEQUENCE

Both the Cowboys and Packers are slated for an unprecedented Sunday-Thursday-Thursday-Sunday run.

Little T Book: BenBella Books
Williams: Peter Brouillet



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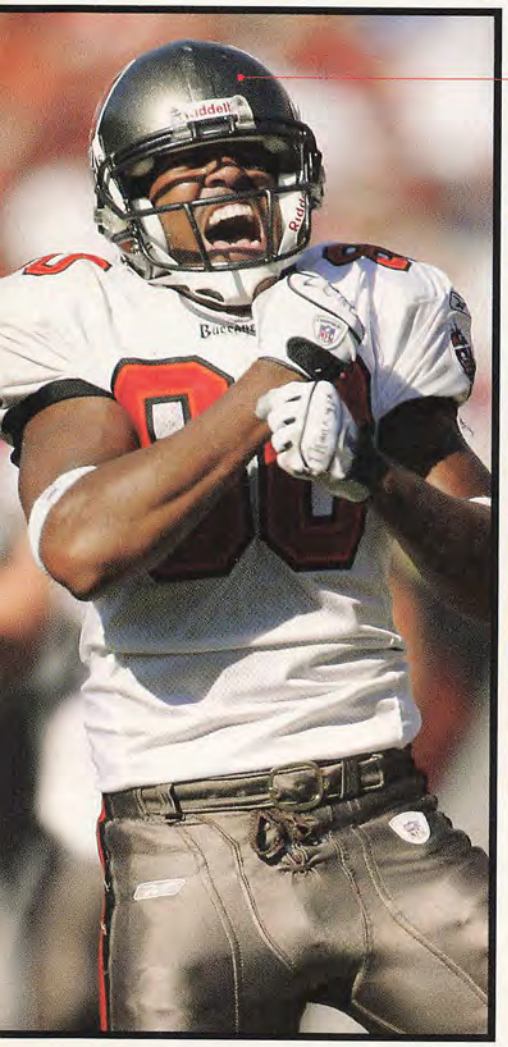
TOUCHDOWN JESUS

Those godless Bengals, always in trouble with the law, were smote last Oct. 15. According to wide receiver Michael Clayton, God was on the Buccaneers bench — and in the review booth, as well — when he caught a TD pass with 35 seconds remaining to beat Cincinnati. Clayton had stretched for the end zone, but the ball popped loose when he hit the ground and the pass was ruled incomplete. During a long review, he withdrew to his own 30-yard-line, knelt and prayed for his first scoring grab in more than 22 months. "I'm just talking to God right there because I know what I did," related Clayton. "I said, 'God, I know you wouldn't let me down. I'm your child.' I just constantly said that over and over and over and over until I convinced myself that God would say, 'Hey, I'm going to turn it around. A catch is a catch. I'm not going to take it away from you.'" The call was reversed, and the extra point made Tampa Bay a first-time winner, 14–13. So why didn't God just let Clayton hold on to the ball in the first place and dispense with the theatrics? Well, that's still under review.



PAIRING UP IN THREES

When Michael Vick finished last season with an 8.45 yards-per-carry rushing average, he barely replaced the name of Beattie Feathers in the NFL record book. The former Chicago Bears back had held the mark at 8.44, set when he was a rookie in 1934. Feathers, however, will always be the response to what would seem an obvious trivia question, but one that few fans can answer. That same year, "Big Chief" became the first NFL player to rush for 1,000 yards in a season. Feathers' career stalled after that, but in the 1950s, he began a 24-year stint as the baseball coach at Wake Forest, where he was beloved — but prone to the malaprop. One spring, on the first day of practice, he gathered his team to divide them into stations. "Half of you go over there," he told his charges, pointing to one corner of the field. "Half of you go over there," he continued, "and the other half go over there."

JAWS OF TRUTH

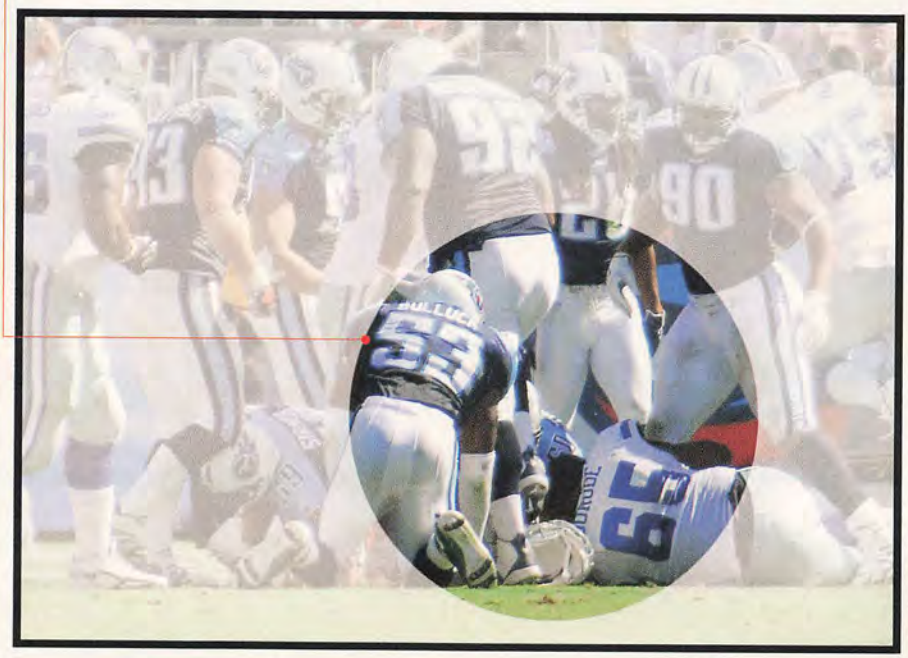
Coaches won't be able to slip anything by the revised Monday Night Football crew — not with the "King of Tape Breakdown" himself, Ron Jaworski, on board. Art Shell knows this better than anyone. Last season, his Raiders had been sacked 15 times (resulting in six fumbles) in their first two games. It was no surprise then that the coach was disinclined to deal with an obvious postgame query from San Jose *Mercury-News* scribe John Ryan — so he just made stuff up.

Asked if his mandated seven-step quarterback drop might be part of the problem, Shell replied, "We did not use the seven-step drop — maybe twice during the whole course of this game. The seven-step drop is not the problem." A skeptical Ryan went and asked then-ESPN analyst Jaworski to count the seven-step drops in Oakland's loss to Baltimore. The tally was 13.

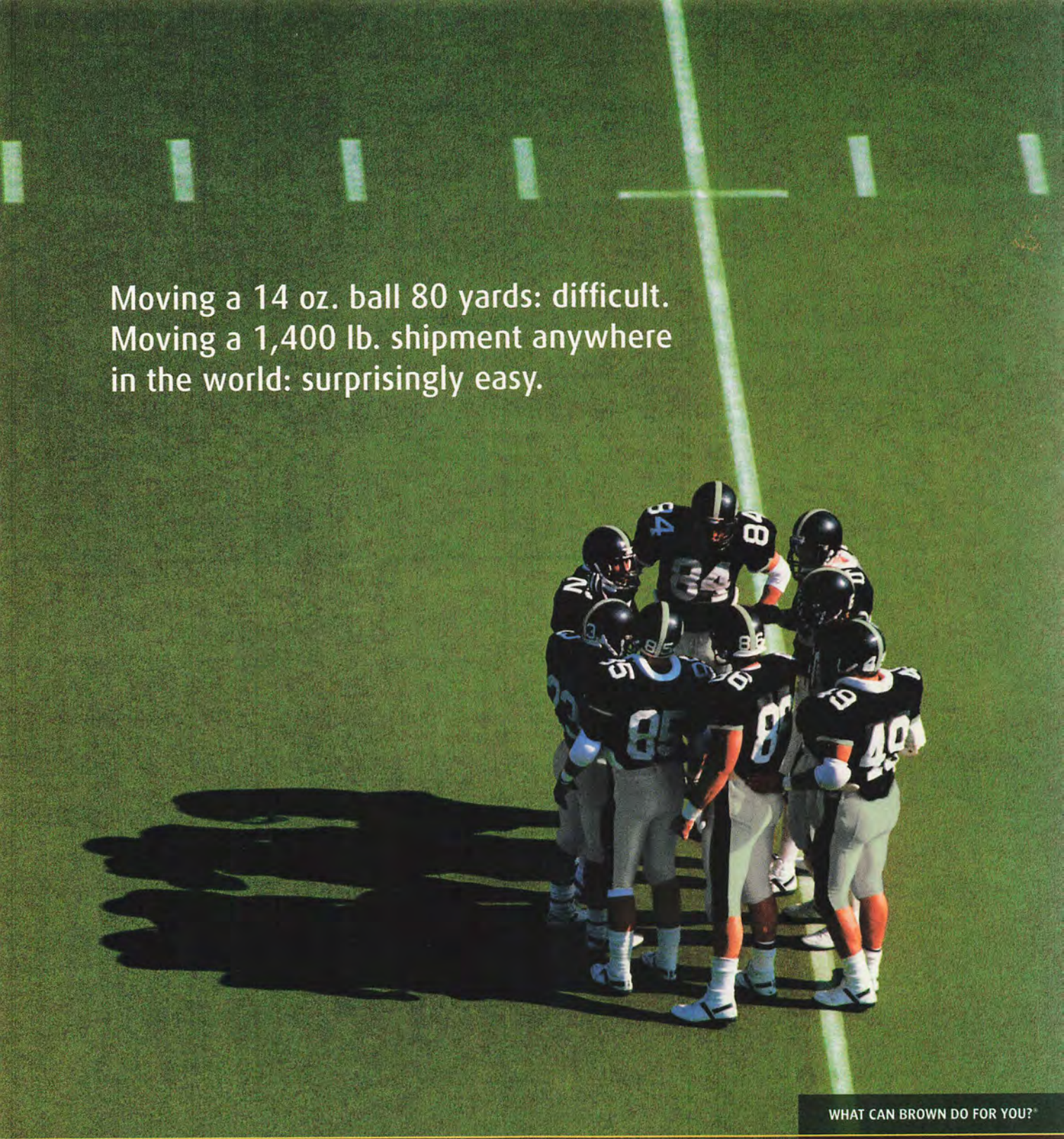
> "He can't help himself. He's like a bucket where the water just keeps flowing. Someone needs to plug him up."
>
> — Keyshawn Johnson on Terrell Owens

CRUEL AND UNUSUAL

Albert Haynesworth's consequence for setting his cleats to "frappe" while they were in Andre Gurode's face: a five-game unpaid suspension. Defensive back Ricky Manning Jr.'s consequence for participating in the unprovoked beating-to-unconsciousness of a student of Persian descent and repeatedly calling him a "faggot" and "you (bleep)-ing Jew" — a $21 million contract from the Bears two days after the incident. Oh yeah, and also this tongue-lashing from GM Jerry Angelo: "We are disappointed in Ricky's involvement." Ouch.



Clayton: Marc Serota/Getty Images
Haynesworth: Mike Strasinger



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GOING AGAINST THE GROIN

It was during the 2006 preseason that Mike Vanderjagt took a shot at Bill Parcells and uttered the immortal line, "I'm sure he's not happy I'm not playing, but he doesn't know my groin." As it turned out, the Cowboys kicker was correct. Vanderjagt tried to boot through his injury in the next game and missed two short field goals in overtime. Parcells, of course, went off on him.

CHARACTER COUNTS

"Bad character to a teammate is different from what bad character is to the outside world," admits Bengals wide receiver T.J. Houshmandzadeh. "All teammates think is, 'Can you help us win or not?'" It was a poignant statement in a year that saw more than 60 arrests of NFL players and at least one of a coach: Lions assistant Joe Cullen who, in August, pulled up to a Wendy's window and ordered a burger, fries and drink — which would have been perfectly legal had he been wearing clothes. In April, the San Diego *Union-Tribune* published an intriguing compilation of every arrest and citation of an NFL player since 2000 they could find. All 308 of them. Here's a synopsis:

- The team with the fewest arrests was the Rams, while the Vikings had the most, with the Bengals gaining quickly.
- Defensive backs and wide receivers were the worst-behaved, piling up 42 percent of all the charges, compared to 13 percent by quarterbacks and offensive linemen.
- Multiple offenders accounted for 40 percent of all incidents.
- Citing possible reasons as everything from poverty to profiling, the paper said that while about 70 percent of NFL players are black, 91 percent of the arrestees were black. (And, by the way, 10 percent of all white offenders were named Sebastian Janikowski.)
- The arrest rate for the general population is far higher than that of NFL players.

BLAME IT ON DEL RIO

According to the South Florida Water Management District, as posted on its web site this spring, "the entire state is under some level of drought." Somebody tell Jaguars coach Jack Del Rio. The Jacksonville newspaper *Folio Weekly* reported that, while the average customer in that city used 72,000 gallons of water for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2006, the Jaguars coach's household used 1.7 *million* gallons. Here's the perspective: To flush that much water, you, your spouse and two kids would have to use the bathroom three times a day for the next 75 years.

ROOKIES RISING

Rookie quarterbacks are typically invisible in the NFL, but they were page one headlines in Week 12 last year. Despite a loss in Minnesota, the Cardinals' Matt Leinart blew up for an NFL rookie-record 405 passing yards, taking to the air in a remarkable 51 of the team's 57 plays from scrimmage. In Washington, Jason Campbell became just the fourth rookie to throw for multiple TDs (his second a late 66-yarder to beat the Panthers) in his first two NFL games. In Nashville, Vince Young was looking like he was back in Austin playing USC as he led his Titans back from a 21–0 deficit with 10 minutes remaining to humiliate the Giants, 24–21. Young passed for two TDs and ran for another in the fourth quarter, becoming the first rookie QB to engineer a comeback of that magnitude. Meanwhile, Joseph Addai was striking a blow for the running backs, as he tied a rookie record with four rushing TDs in the Colts' win over the Eagles.

DIRTY BOMB

You just never know when a dirty shirt, a dirty blonde and a blissed-out FOX producer will converge to form the perfect storm. It did for a girl named Heather. You would know her as the bombshell Saints fan flaunting her F*** DA EAGLES (well, there weren't really asterisks) half-top that was shown on-screen a little too long during the Philly-New Orleans playoff game. Soon after, she landed herself a photo spread in Maxim to extend her several seconds of fame into at least a month. So Heather, inquiring minds want to know: What would inspire a nice girl like you to vogue partially undressed and jiggle your profanities on national TV? "I was drinking Red Bull and vodka, and pouring Pop Rocks into my mouth, letting it foam out," she explained. Oh, yeah. That would do it.

OVERHEARD

"[The Jaguars] are like the stand-up comic who can only use vulgarity and curse words because he lacks intelligence and lacks class. ... A team that gets personal fouls the way they do — the roughing penalties — they just don't have any material."

— The Colts' Hunter Smith, being pretty cheeky for a punter.

I'D LIKE TO THANK BOBBY BEATHARD...

"He's a nightmare you can't even imagine." That line of type appears in the opening sequence of the trailer for an independent film scheduled to be released this year. The speaker is Rodney Harrison. The subject is Ryan Leaf. Producer Tim Carr of Parking Lot Films, who will also act in "Leaf," has tackled the subject of the NFL's four-letter word for "bust," intrigued by the quarterback as "a guy who put himself in a pickle and spent his whole career getting out of it." Not that Leaf really got out of it — he's now West Texas A&M's golf coach.

TRUTH IN ADVERTISING

Who says being bad costs athletes endorsement dollars? A new football video game released last season, *Blitz: The League*, features Bill Romanowski and Lawrence Taylor as cover boys and — under fictitious names — game personalities. In real life, Romo ended a teammate's career with a punch during practice and confessed to the extensive use of steroids and human growth hormone. L.T. endured myriad legal troubles and admitted to spending thousands of dollars a day on narcotics. The game's tagline could hardly be more appropriate: "Win At Any Cost."

OVERHEARD

"What's up George? Where are your daughters?"

— What Steelers center Chukky Okobi said he was going to ask President Bush when he visited the White House last June.

Leaf: Scott Halleran/Getty Images
Heather:

SEPT. 17: Ryan Longwell accounts for all of the Vikings' 16 points in a victory over the Panthers — with three field goals, including the game-winner in overtime; a TD pass on a fake field goal; and an extra point.
SEPT. 18: The defending Super Bowl champion Steelers become the first team in six years not to advance the ball past their opponent's 46-yard line, with the failure coming in a 9–0 loss to Jacksonville.
SEPT. 24: T.J. Houshmandzadeh catches TD passes 54 seconds apart in a Cincinnati win over Pittsburgh.
SEPT. 24: Charlie Frye is the first Browns QB to rush for TDs in three straight games since Otto Graham in 1954.
OCT. 2: After the Albert Haynesworth face-stomping incident, ProFootballTalk.com, afeared that his punishment won't be severe enough, supplies its readers with the address and phone number of Nashville's district attorney general, as well as a link to a form on his website to report the episode as a crime.
OCT. 8: The Eagles' Lito Sheppard is the first player in history to return two interceptions more than 100 yards in his career — and both are against the Cowboys.
OCT. 8: After 46 straight wins, the Packers lose a home game in which Brett Favre does not throw an interception.
DEC. 16: Michael Vick throws four TD passes, but none is longer than nine yards.
DEC. 17: The Titans top the Jaguars in a game in which they are outstatted as follows — 396 yards, 23 first downs and 44:22 time of possession to 98 yards, five first downs and 15:38 with the ball.
DEC. 24: The Giants fail to run a single play from Saints territory in a 30–7 defeat.
DEC. 24: Carolina's Chris Weinke, who had a 32–3 record at Florida State, ends his 17-game losing streak as a starting NFL quarterback in a game against Atlanta in which he throws seven passes for 32 yards.
DEC. 26: DeAngelo Hall shows up at alma mater Virginia Tech's Chick-Fil-A Bowl practice in Atlanta driving a Rolls-Royce — three days after arriving at a previous workout in a Bentley. (We wonder where his "Beamer" was.)
DEC. 31: 43-year-old Vinny Testaverde hits 35-year-old Troy Brown with a six-yard TD pass — the oldest pair ever to hook up for a score, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.
DEC. 31: For the first time in 23 years, a season ends with no team having exactly 11 wins.
JAN. 13: If sacks are included as pass plays, the Colts and Ravens each attempt the same number (31) of aerials for the identical net yardage (161) in their playoff game.
JAN. 14: After totaling 11 receptions in the regular season, New England's Jabar Gaffney nabs 10 in a playoff win over the Chargers.
JAN. 21: The epic Colts-Patriots AFC Championship Game features TDs by a center, a guard and a defensive tackle playing offense.
FEB. 17: Colts tight end Dallas Clark is ejected from a girls high school basketball game for ragging on the refs.
MAR. 17-18: Mascot-cheerleader types "Crazy Ray" of the Cowboys and the retired "Dolfan Denny" of the Dolphins pass away on the same weekend.

CALENDAR OF THE WEIRD

A CHRONOLOGY OF ODDBALL OCCURRENCES FROM THE 2006-07 SEASON

OCT. 11: Peyton Manning, who's never missed a game, misses his first-ever practice (to attend a funeral).
OCT. 15: In the fourth quarter, the Seahawks' Josh Brown kicks two 49-yard field goals and a game-winning 54-yarder as time expires to beat the Rams.
OCT. 16: Collapsing against the Bears, the Cardinals become the first team to lose a game in which it holds a 20-point lead despite not allowing an offensive TD.
OCT. 22: The Eagles outgain the Bucs, 506 yards to 196, but lose for the second week in a row on a last-play field goal — this one a 62-yarder by Matt Bryant.
NOV. 5: Jacksonville extends its home scoring streak to 87 unanswered points.
NOV. 5: In two Monday Night Football appearances, the Raiders have now allowed 18 sacks and scored zero points.
NOV. 12: Eleven games are decided by seven or fewer points, and 10 are won by visiting teams.

NOV. 12: Chicago's Devin Hester catches a missed field goal and stands in the end zone while the Giants run off the field. He then races 108 yards for a TD, tying the record for the longest play in NFL history. The other 108-yarder occurred exactly 52 Sundays earlier by teammate Nathan Vasher.

NOV. 19: For the second time of the season, a quarterback (David Carr matching Mark Brunell) completes a single-game record 22 straight passes — and does it on the same field.
NOV. 19: Drew Brees becomes the ninth QB to pass for 500 yards in a game and the fifth to lose a game while doing it.
NOV. 23: Larry Johnson has 65 carries for 311 yards in five days.
NOV. 26: In a loss to the Vikings in which they score on two 99-yard returns, the Cardinals rush the ball only six times.
DEC. 10: Terrell Owens scores his ninth TD of the season — every one of them in the second half.
DEC. 14: 49ers center Eric Heitmann sets a new standard for pain threshold, calmly instructing teammates to "Get the trainers," without so much as a whimper after snapping his tibia.

Hester: AP / Wide World

FOOTBALL AND SWEETIES ROLLED INTO ONE. LIFE IS GOOD.

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THAR'S BAD BEHAVIOR IN THEM THAR HILLS

The resurgent West Virginia University program might be teaching football, but it's not teaching etiquette. Before the 2006 NFL season was half over, three ex-Mountaineers had been suspended: Chris Henry (stemming from four arrests in three states in less than a year), Jerry Porter for insubordination and Pacman Jones for allegedly spitting in the face of a college student when her friend wouldn't dance with him. Henry and Jones, of course, later were drydocked for 2007 games as their transgressions multiplied.

THAR'S GOLD IN THEM THAR BALLPLAYERS

Far be it from Extra Points to repeat salacious gossip. Well, not too far … This stuff was just too spicy to keep it penned up in Chicago. There exists in a dank corner of the universe a woman named Tyna Robertson, who made the news last season by making a very public spectacle of a custody fight with Brian Urlacher, the father of her one-year-old son. According to the Chicago *Sun-Times*, her résumé includes a stint as a stripper ("I wasn't even a good dancer.") and a history of spending more time in court than Judge Judy. In past legal tiffs, Robertson had been sued by "Lord of the Dance" star Michael Flatley ($100 million for a false rape allegation), and by a man who gave her a corporate credit card on which, he says, she ran up nearly a half-million dollars in (mostly gambling) debt. Another legal entanglement was a bankruptcy filing based on her being unemployed and owing thousands to stores and casinos yet still owning a Corvette. During the Urlacher imbroglio, Robertson stated her monthly income at $500, but her monthly expenses as including $3,000 for a nanny, $2,000 for clothes, $1,300 for vacation and $600 for clubs and entertaining. "I go to church six or seven times a week," she offered as an explanation for why she bore no acrimony toward Urlacher. Robertson readily admits to dating a who's who of rich dudes, such as boxer Andrew Golata and several other professional athletes. So how to explain such "credentials?" "I must," she admits, "be easy on the eyes." And hard on the pocketbook.

OVERHEARD

"You could say you're going to draft the pope, and someone would say he's too old. Draft Santa Claus, and someone would say he wouldn't fit down the chimney."

— Agent Ben Dogra on how pre-draft hype and hysteria ruins rookie reputations.

I GOT YOUR NUMBER

David Givens took Tyrone Calico's number and even his job, but he couldn't give him his money. When Givens joined the Titans from the Patriots last season, he desperately wanted to wear his usual No. 87, but it belonged to Calico. He offered his fellow receiver $10,000 for it, but was turned down. Eventually, the offer rose to $20,000, but Calico rejected that, too. By the time the season started, Calico — who probably could have used the cash — was cut, and Givens got No. 87 for free.

Getty Images

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13 THINGS TO WATCH in 2007

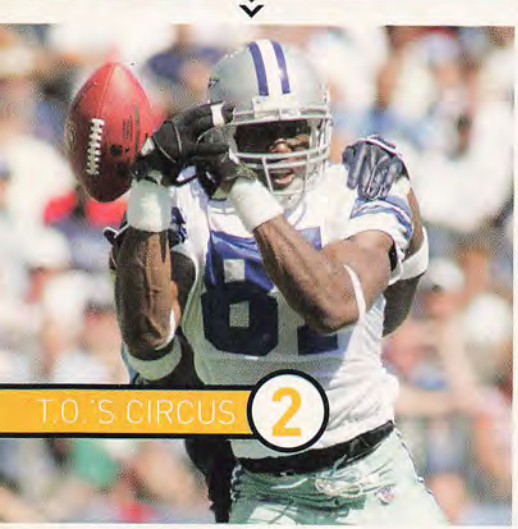
By Vito Stellino

Is Rex Grossman Mentally Tough Enough to Overcome his Super Bowl Meltdown?

A quarterback needs a short memory. He can't let bad plays get into his psyche. He must overcome them. The question for Rex Grossman is whether he can do that after melting down in the Super Bowl loss to Indianapolis. Grossman cost his team a chance to beat the Colts as he lost 11 yards on consecutive plays in the third period and threw two interceptions in the fourth quarter.

Even worse was his demeanor, his deer-in-the-headlights look. NFL Films caught Colts assistant coach John Teerlinck saying, "He's scared to death." And he doesn't take criticism well. He called the media "ignorant" before the Super Bowl and said afterward that in the media, "You're either great or you're terrible." Well, that describes Grossman, who had a 0.0 quarterback rating in his worst game and a 148 rating in his best.

Now Grossman has the burden of showing he can put that Super Bowl behind him and become an effective leader who can take the Bears back to the Super Bowl for another shot at a championship. Grossman has to learn that if you can't take the heat, you can't be a top-echelon NFL quarterback.



The Terrell Owens Circus

Terrell Owens is fast becoming the Paris Hilton of the NFL. He's famous for being famous. The media and the NFL can't get enough of him. The NFL even scheduled the Cowboys' annual visit to Philadelphia for a Sunday night primetime NBC game on Nov. 4. They couldn't resist milking T.O.'s second trip back to Philadelphia after he crashed there in 2005.

What is being ignored is that he's no longer a great receiver. He dropped too many passes last year to overlook all his baggage. Like arriving late for practice, falling asleep in meetings, arguing with former passing game coordinator Todd Haley, failing to learn the plays and that golden oldie, complaining about not getting the ball thrown to him enough.

He also had surgery twice on his right ring finger in the offseason after tearing a tendon during the 2006 season, and it's anybody's guess how that will affect his receiving ability.

Yet the Cowboys continue to enable him. Former coach Bill Parcells referred to him only as "The player" before departing, but new coach Wade Wilson even calls him by his name. "He's part of the Dallas Cowboys family, so he's a part of my family," Phillips said.

Don't be surprised if he again turns the Cowboys into a dysfunctional family and a three-ring circus. He always does.

Vick vs. Schaub

The Atlanta Falcons and the Houston Texans play each other only once every four years because they're in opposite conferences. Fortunately, they'll meet this year on Sept. 30 in one of the most intriguing games of the season.

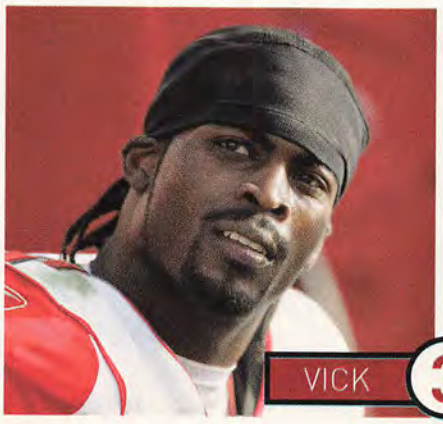
That's because it'll be the first duel between Michael Vick and Matt Schaub since new coach Bobby Petrino put all of his chips on Vick's number and traded Schaub to the Texans.

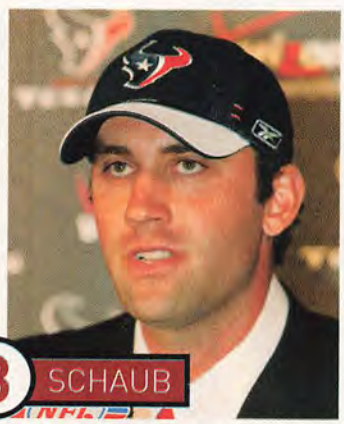
How this deal works out will be one of the more interesting subplots of the season.

Remember, just a year ago, new coach Gary Kubiak did the same thing in Houston that Petrino is doing in Atlanta. Kubiak decided to bet on David Carr and didn't draft Vince Young or pursue Drew Brees in free agency.

Kubiak then decided after one year that Carr wasn't the answer, so he released the former No. 1 overall pick and traded for Schaub. Petrino is gambling that Vick can be the team's future. Kubiak lost that gamble last year on Carr. Petrino's sticking with Vick even though there are suggestions that Vick is a coach killer. He often seems more of an athlete than quarterback.

If Vick can't live up to Petrino's expectations, Petrino will be looking for a quarterback in a year. And if Schaub is a hit in Houston, Petrino will have to explain why he traded him away.





Grossman: Peter Brouillet; Owens: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports
Vick: Doug pensinger/Getty Images; Schaub: Bill Baptist/Getty Images

Is the Third Time the Charm for Norv Turner?

Turner is acclaimed as one of the best offensive coordinators in the league. Yet the jury is still out on whether he's a good head coach. He was 50–60–1 in Washington from 1994-2000 and 9–23 in two years in Oakland. Those are Rich Kotite-type numbers.

Yet, amazingly enough, he landed the best job in the NFL, coaching the San Diego Chargers, after Marty Schottenheimer's relationship with general manager A.J. Smith frayed. Smith was tired of clashing with the strong-willed Schottenheimer so he got the coach he wanted in Turner.

Turner's a nice guy who won't make waves. And his defenders argue that he didn't have good teams in Washington or Oakland.

Turner will win in San Diego because he's probably got the best talent in the league. But can he take the Chargers to the Super Bowl? That's the key question. Turner has a reputation for being too much of a players' coach who lacks leadership skills.

Assuming that Turner hasn't changed, this will be a test for such veterans as LaDainian Tomlinson and Philip Rivers. They're going to have to make sure the players are self-motivated and don't take advantage of Turner's easy-rider style.

The K Ball Controversy

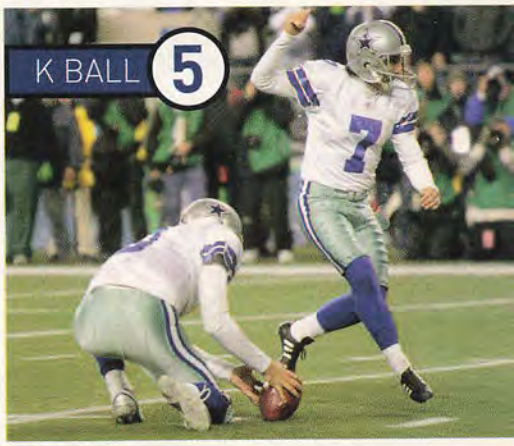
When Dallas' Tony Romo fumbled that snap in the playoff game in Seattle, there were suggestions that the K ball used on the play was too slick and hard to handle.

To his credit, Romo never used that as an excuse, but the mishap caused a lot of discussion because it probably cost the Cowboys a playoff win and may have been a factor in coach Bill Parcells' decision to walk away.

So the NFL has taken action. It will allow the K balls to be rubbed down for 45 minutes instead of 20 minutes by the team's ball boy before the game to make them easier to handle. And the dozen K balls will be numbered from 1 to 12. They'll keep using the first ball until or unless it is lost, possibly by being kicked into the stands.

The result is that a new ball can't arbitrarily be tossed into the game in the final minute of play.

This means that Romo has already affected the game. It's not likely that the league would have taken any action if he hadn't dropped that snap. If a snap is dropped at an important game this year, the K ball shouldn't be a factor.



The Kid Brother

Eli Manning is a member of the NFL's first family.

His father, Archie, was a long-time NFL star and his brother, Peyton, is the reigning Super Bowl champion quarterback. But with his heritage comes the pressure to live up to his name.

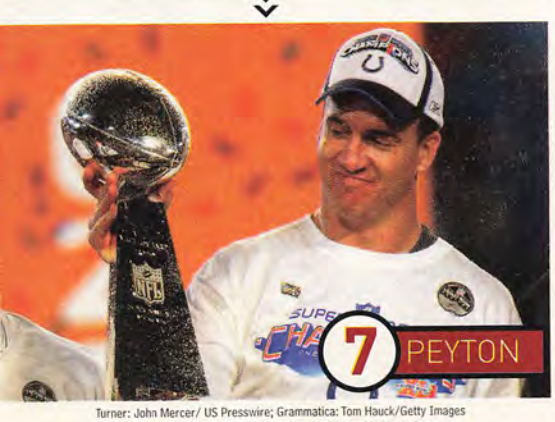
And it doesn't help that Eli Manning said he didn't want to play in San Diego when he was drafted three years ago and was traded to the New York Giants, a bizarre decision to say the least. Who wouldn't want to play in San Diego with its postcard perfect weather? And a chance to hand off to LaDainian Tomlinson?

Granted, John Elway snubbed the Colts back in 1983, but that was because his father, the late Jack Elway, had a long-standing West Coast feud with then-Colts' coach Frank Kush. Eli's refusal to play in San Diego is more puzzling.

Making the story more intriguing is the fact that Philip Rivers, the quarterback the Chargers wound up with instead of Eli, played so well last year while Manning struggled with the Giants.

And Manning is in much more of a pressure-cooker situation in New York than he would have been in San Diego where there are no screaming back-page tabloid headlines.

The pressure will increase on Manning this year now that Tiki Barber has retired. He has to show he can carry the team. Entering his fourth season, Eli is running out of time to live up to his last name.



The Older Brother

Peyton Manning is now at the top of his game. He finally won a Super Bowl. He was a guest host on *Saturday Night Live* and joked that he's appeared in half of the commercials shown on TV.

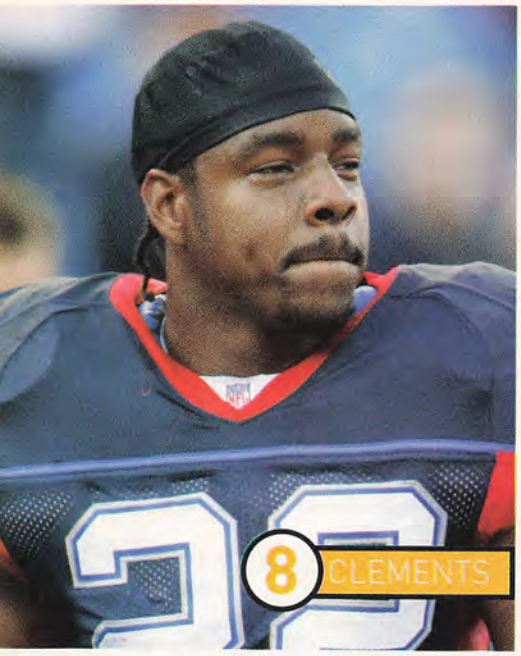
Yet you have to wonder whether he'll ever be the quarterback he once was. Manning won the Super Bowl while throwing seven interceptions and only three touchdown passes in four playoff games. His favorite receiver, Marvin Harrison, didn't catch a touchdown pass in the four games, although he had 15 catches for 193 yards.

The interesting thing, though, is that Manning was able to adjust and feature the running game to win the Super Bowl. The Colts had 191 yards rushing in the Super Bowl victory over the Bears compared to Manning's 247 yards passing.

Dan Marino never won a Super Bowl, and one of the reasons was that he never was patient enough to feature the running game. Manning showed he's willing to adjust to take what the defense will give him.

Now it remains to be seen whether Manning will continue to rely on the run as the Colts attempt to repeat as Super Bowl champions.

Turner: John Mercer/ US Presswire; Grammatica: Tom Hauck/Getty Images
Eli Manning: Steve Moore; Peyton Manning: David Drapkin/Getty Images



The Effect of the Spending Splurge

It was a perfect storm for the NFL.

The teams had a lot of money to spend in free agency and not a lot of great players to spend it on, because most of the teams had locked up their best players. The result was that even by the standards of free agency, teams spent wildly for less than franchise-type players.

Cornerback Nate Clements, who isn't even the best cornerback in the league, became the highest-paid defensive player in the NFL with an eight-year, $80 million contract from San Francisco. Granted, it's backloaded and probably is more likely to be a six-year, $56 million deal, but that's still more than $9 million a year for a cornerback who isn't another Champ Bailey.

And three guards — Derrick Dockery, Eric Steinbach and Leonard Davis — got deals in the seven-year, $49 million neighborhood. Even though Steve Hutchinson got that kind of contract from Minnesota last year, Hutchinson is a much better player than the three guards who struck it rich this year.

What this spending frenzy is likely to lead to is a lot of grumbling by players who signed long-term deals a year or two ago and will now feel they're not being paid market value.

And next year's spending may go into another stratosphere.

The Toughest Job in Football

Mike Tomlin got what appears to be a dream job this year — the head coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

The Steelers are one of the NFL's most successful franchises, and they're patient with their coaches. Tomlin is only the third one they've hired since 1969.

But the main reason Chuck Noll and Bill Cowher were the Steelers' only two coaches in that span is that they were so successful. Noll is still the only coach to win four Super Bowls and, while Cowher only went to two Super Bowls and won only one, his teams were fixtures in the AFC playoffs.

This means that Tomlin doesn't have much margin for error. While the Rooney family is noted for being patient, the team's fans have become spoiled by success.

Tomlin takes over a team that went 15–1 in 2004 and lost in the AFC title game and then won the Super Bowl in 2005. They slumped to 8–8 last year when Cowher was a lame-duck coach and Ben Roethlisberger was suffering from the effects of his motorcycle accident.

But Tomlin won't have the honeymoon period a new coach usually gets. He'll be expected to get the Steelers to the playoffs this year.

Can Matt Millen Survive Another Year in Detroit?

The decline of the Detroit Lions mirrors the decline of the American auto industry. In the 1950s, when the auto industry was king in Detroit, the Lions won three championships. It seemed appropriate that a member of one of Detroit's first families, William Clay Ford, the grandson of Henry Ford, bought the Lions in 1964.

Under Ford, though, the Lions have struggled the same way the American auto industry has. They haven't won a championship since 1957 and have never appeared in the Super Bowl.

Ford has tended to be patient — too patient — in sticking with the executives he's hired.

The latest example is Matt Millen, who has survived six years against all odds despite a 24–72 mark. The record for losses in a six-year period is 74, set by Tampa Bay from 1983-88. Although Millen was a successful player and broadcaster, he had no front office experience when Ford decided to hand him the keys to his kingdom. And his lack of experience has shown. He has been guilty of a long list of blunders. Like hiring Marty Mornhinweg as his first coach and drafting three wide receivers with his first pick — Charles Rogers, Roy Williams and Mike Williams — for three straight years.

But Millen has somehow convinced Ford he's the answer instead of the problem. Until Ford is willing to admit Millen is the problem, Millen will keep his job.

Clements: Craig Melvin US Presswire;
Tomlin: AP/ Wide World;
Millen: Tom Pidgeon/Getty Images

Models shown with available accessories.

Since when does cruising have to be a cruise?

A cruiser is a cruiser, right? At Suzuki, we disagree. But so you don't have to take our word for it, we picked three friends, George, Tracy and Jeff, for the ride of a lifetime on Suzuki Boulevard cruisers from D.C. to Daytona. George's response to his first ride on the M109R: "The power is incredible!" He should know. He rides track days on a GSX-R1000. Jeff wired into other GSX-R influences right away: "What I find is a lot of the same stuff: radial-mounted brakes, inverted fork and fuel injection." Jeff feels the M109R delivers handling as impressive as its power: "The bike's awesome. It turns in pretty quick, especially with that wide 240 rear tire." With exceptional power, handling and braking, the M109R has all the ingredients needed to make it, in George's words, "...as bad as you want it to be." And middleweight riders take note: The M50 has all the style in a more compact package. Check them out at your Suzuki dealer and find out why Jeff says, "The GSX-R technology on the M109R takes cruising to a whole new level." www.suzukicycles.com/rideofalifetime.

BOULEVARD

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The Coin Toss

The overtime coin toss doesn't usually get much attention.

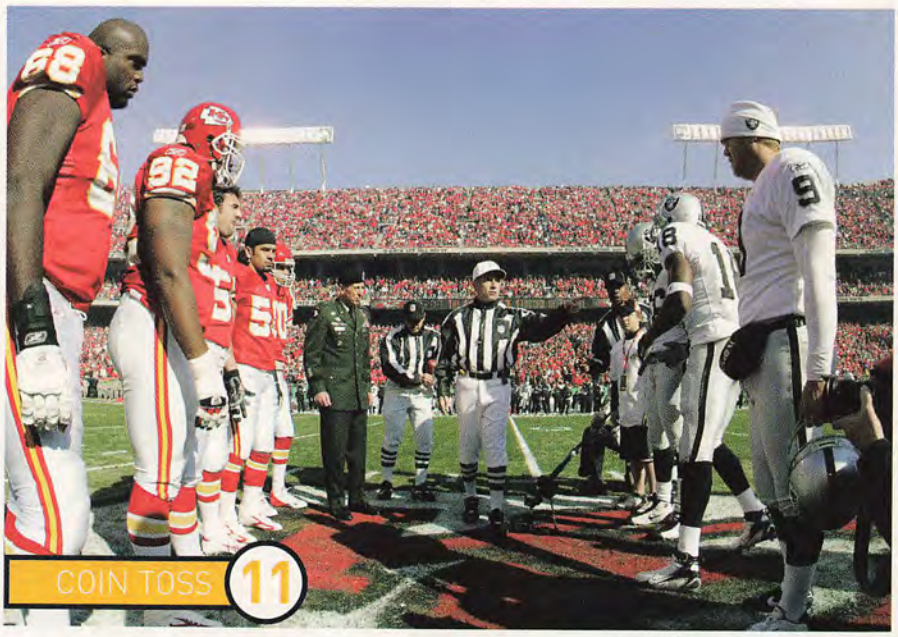
It's often a time to hit the fridge for a cold one and a snack. That's because from 1973, when the current overtime format began, until '94, the teams that won the coin toss only won half the games. The coin toss didn't appear to have an effect on the outcome.

That started to change when the kickoff was moved back to the 30-yard line in 1994. Now the team that wins the overtime coin toss appears to have a definite advantage. Last year, the coin toss winner won seven of 11 overtime games for a 63.6 percentage.

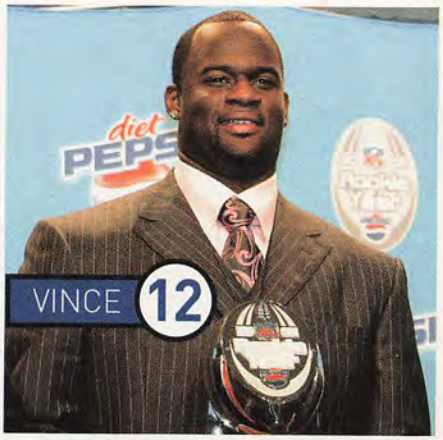
From 2002 to 2006, the winner of the coin toss won 51 of 85 games with one tie. That's why the competition committee decided to recommend at the March owners meeting that the kickoff for overtime be moved back to the 35.

The move seemed logical. The NFL doesn't want the coin toss deciding games. Yet the surprising thing is that the measure couldn't get 24 votes and didn't pass. One problem was that some teams wanted each team to be guaranteed one possession. That measure didn't pass either, so the impasse remains.

If the winners of the overtime coin toss continue to have the edge this year, maybe the owners will address the problem. Meanwhile, pay attention to the overtime coin toss. It can be the difference between winning and losing.



Will Vince Young Avoid a Sophomore Jinx?



Vince Young showed once again last year that he's a winner.

A year after leading Texas to the national championship with a comeback victory over USC, he came off the bench to lead the Titans to six consecutive wins and take them to the cusp of the playoffs before they lost the season finale to New England, 40–23.

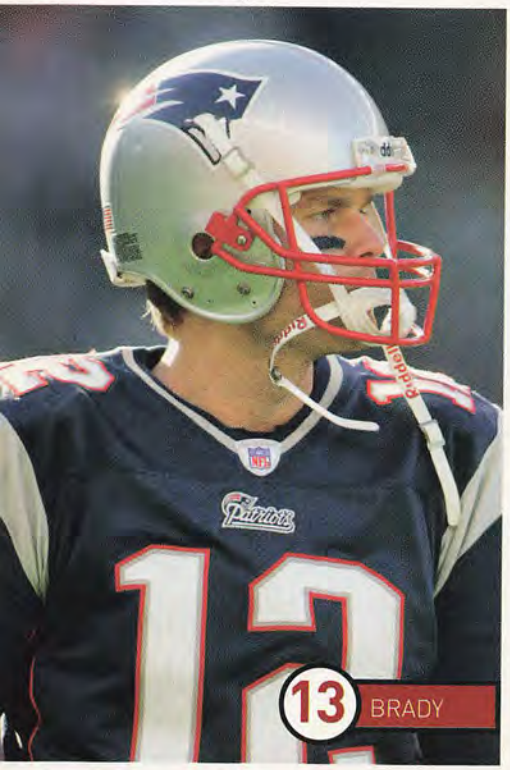
His rookie season was a virtual highlight reel and earned him Rookie of the Year honors.

But all those highlight reel plays obscured the fact that his quarterback rating was only 66.7, he threw 13 interceptions to 12 touchdown passes, and he completed only 51.5 percent of his passes.

He did rush for 552 yards and seven touchdowns, but ultimately, a quarterback has to earn his money with his arm, not his legs.

As he attempts to take the Titans to the playoffs, Young's challenge this season is to become a more effective passer. Now that defensive coordinators around the league have had an offseason to get a bead on him, his task will become more difficult.

And he's raised expectations too, meaning he'll be expected to pull out games the way he did last year. To do that, he's got to be able to beat teams throwing the ball.



13. Tom Brady at 30

No quarterback has ever gotten off to a better start than Tom Brady. He won his first 10 playoff games, including three Super Bowls, in his first four seasons as a starter.

But now he's lost in the playoffs for two years in a row. And he'll be 30 on Aug. 3.

So the question is whether he'll be another Troy Aikman, who won his third Super Bowl in his seventh year and never won another one, or join the ranks of Terry Bradshaw and Joe Montana, the only quarterbacks to win four Super Bowls.

Brady already has his ticket punched for the Hall of Fame regardless of whether he wins another. But Brady certainly doesn't want his legacy to be that he couldn't win a fourth championship in the second half of his career. Brady's a fierce competitor who doesn't want his best days to be behind him.

One of Brady's problems the past two seasons is that he hasn't had a quality receiving corps. That's why the Patriots went out and obtained Randy Moss, Donte' Stallworth, Kelley Washington and Wes Welker in the offseason.

With an improved receiving corps, Brady may once again rule the NFL.

Coin Toss: Tim Umphrey/Getty Images
Young: Scott Boehm/Getty Images; Brady: Greg Cooper/US Presswire

Three children. Ten grandchildren. Twelve great-grandchildren. And over 4000 hours on water skis. Frank Shearer has loved every hour on skis almost as much as he loves his grandchildren. That's why he's still at it, almost 80 years after he first set foot on the water in 1926. Of course, skiing wasn't his only love during the past century. He also loved being a doctor. When his practice began

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in 1932, he was paid $5 for every baby he delivered. He started saving for retirement during his first year of practice, and he's been happily retired for decades. Genworth Financial's retirement income solutions can provide you with options to help meet the challenge of funding a vibrant, active future by giving you retirement income you can't outlive. No matter how long that may be.

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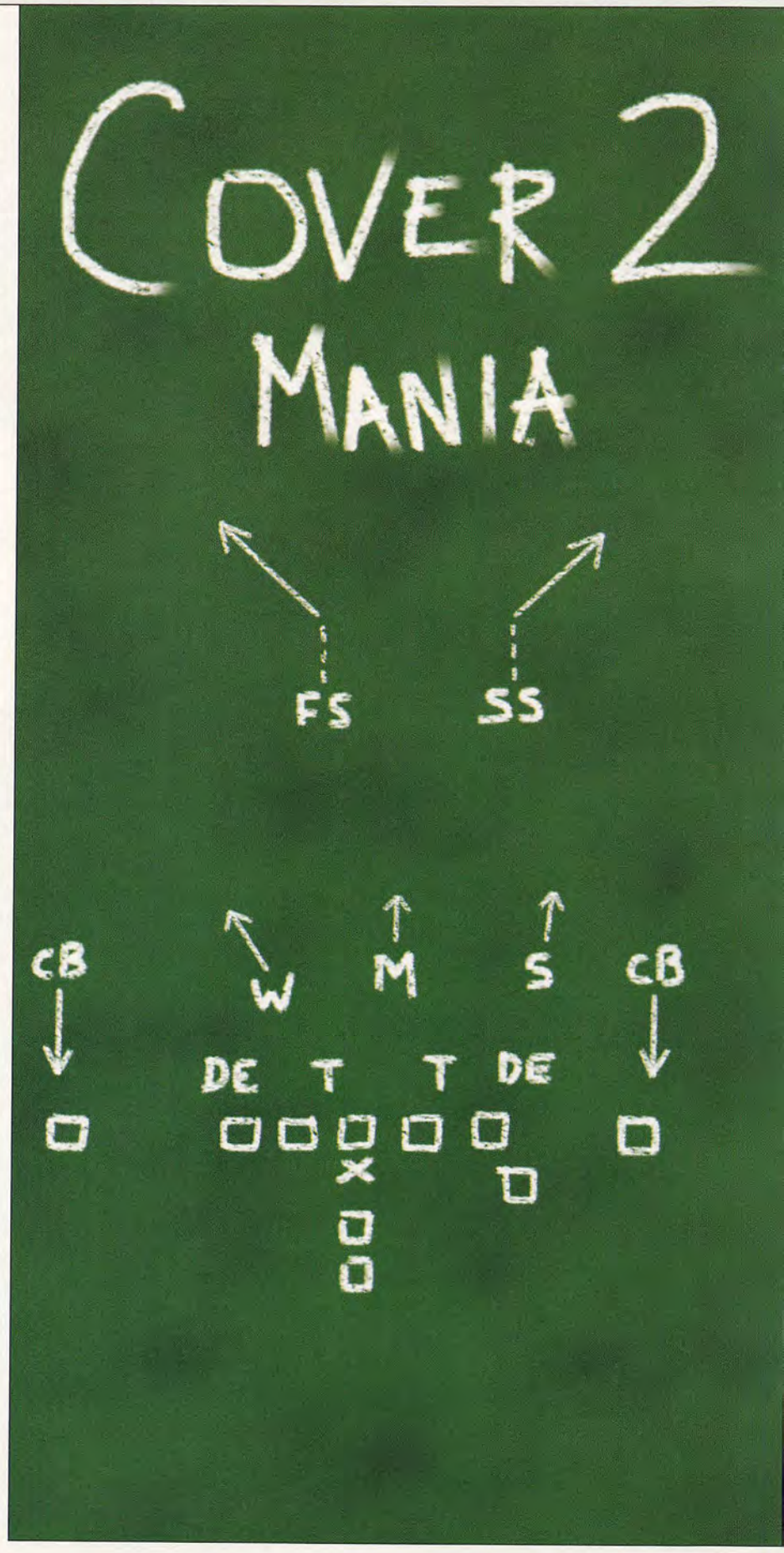
BY MICHAEL BRADLEY

COVER 2 MANIA



Monte Kiffin isn't the most public man, at least when it comes to his beloved Cover 2 defense. "I don't like to give out many details," he says, as if he is being asked to reveal his deepest secrets.

It's tough to blame Kiffin. First of all, he's a football coach, and coaches guard their covert strategies closely. But as one of the league's Cover 2 godfathers, Kiffin is particularly protective, because the growing collection of teams using some form of the defense has made it less rare and therefore more susceptible to attack. Back when only the Bucs (and perhaps a couple others) were employing the scheme, enemy offenses were at a significant disadvantage. Here they were, sailing along against the standard NFL fare, when the Cover 2 sprang forward, posing a set of problems that couldn't possibly be solved in a week of preparation.

"It's like the wishbone in college football," Kiffin says. "At first, nobody knew how to defense it. Then, everybody started using it, and it became easier to stop.

"With the Cover 2, offenses used to go 10 games and not see it. That would throw them off. Now, it's not as effective, because so many teams are using it."

It has been said for years that the NFL is a "copycat league," and teams' growing infatuation with the Cover 2 proves that adage. What began in Pittsburgh back in the 1970s, and was reintroduced to the mainstream by the Bucs in the 1990s, has become a defensive staple of many squads, to the point where old practitioners like Kiffin are now reticent to speak about their versions of the scheme, for fear that their tweaks and variations will be copied, or worse, discovered by offensive coordinators looking for ways to exploit the defense.

"A lot of people are playing it now," Kiffin says. "There are more and more every year."

Why? The answer is simple: The thing works. Sure, it has a few holes, like a susceptibility to the run and a weakness against a quarterback who can hang in the pocket an extra second or two. Teams employing the Cover 2 had better have a bunch of sure tacklers. But ask any NFC team that had to deal with the conference champion Bears last year, and you'll find that those vulnerabilities aren't so easy to find and exploit.

The overriding goal of the Cover 2 is to limit big plays by forcing offenses to settle for shorter throws and then smothering receivers once they get the ball. It's a system that works best with a four-man front and three linebackers. The safeties sit back, 10-15 yards away from the ball, and the corners are rolled up onto the receivers, the better to prevent them from making clean breaks off the line. When employed properly, the Cover 2 forces passers to get rid of the ball quickly, thanks to a ferocious rush, and keeps the damage on completed passes to a minimum. Last year, on first- and second-down plays, with three linebackers in the game, Kansas City allowed one pass that was 22 yards long and four between 10 and 19 yards. That's good Cover 2 play. Here's how it all breaks down.

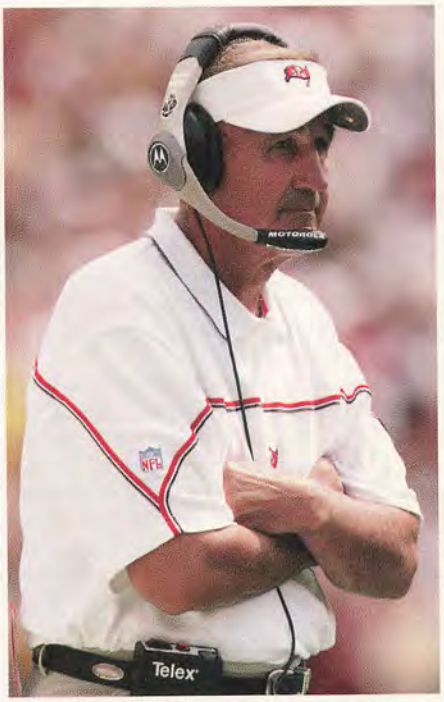
HISTORY

Any discussion of the Cover 2 requires a trip back in time to Pittsburgh in the 1970s and defensive coordinator Bud Carson. Although there had been a few previous instances of rolled-up corners and safeties who each patrolled half the field behind them, it was Carson who came up with the idea of using middle linebacker Jack Lambert to drop back into coverage up the middle, the better to protect the backliners, who had to range wide.

Lambert was perfect for the defense, because he was fast enough to handle coverage assignments, sharp enough mentally to diagnose running plays and fierce enough to shut down enemy backs without much safety help. Meanwhile, the Steel Curtain front four put tremendous pressure on opposing quarterbacks without the benefit of blitz help, another key part of the Cover 2. Four Super Bowl titles later, the scheme had achieved legendary status.

Its second famous act came in Florida, when Tony Dungy took over the Buccaneer defense. A former Steeler safety, Dungy knew the Cover 2. He also understood that with stalwart D-linemen like Warren Sapp and Simeon Rice, Tampa Bay had the up-front power to reach the pocket without help of rushing linebackers or defensive backs. Dungy became headman with the Bucs in '96 and hired Kiffin as his defensive coordinator. They used Derrick Brooks as their Lambert and took advantage of John Lynch's head-hunting skills at safety. Though Dungy wasn't there when the Bucs won the Super Bowl following the '02 season, Kiffin and the Cover 2 were.

Today, the thing is all over the NFL. Bill Belichick used it to frustrate Indianapolis earlier this century, and the Colts employed it to beat the Bears in Super Bowl XLI. At least 10 other clubs make some use of it, and you can expect even more, since both Super clubs were Cover 2 squads. "There are a lot of different methods of it," Buffalo defensive coordinator Perry Fewell says. "It's player-friendly and coach-friendly."



Bud Carson (above, left) unleashed the Cover Two on an unsuspecting league with his Steel Curtain defenses in Pittsburgh. Monte Kiffin (above, right) perfected the scheme with Tampa Bay in the 1990s.

Carson: George Gojkovich/Getty Images
Kiffin: Doug Pensinger/Getty Images

UP FRONT

One of the big reasons the Colts were able to run for so many yards (191) against the Bears was the absence of Chicago tackle Tommie Harris, who had been felled by a hamstring injury. Without Harris, the Bears weren't able to stop the run or rush the passer the way they wanted to. Although the Colts didn't pile up the points, they were able to control tempo and clock.

Because the Cover 2 sacrifices stopping the run by not walking up a safety near the line of scrimmage, teams need defensive linemen who can rush the passer and stop the run. That's not always the easiest combination to locate. Harris is one exception, although he thrives largely because of his quickness. At 6'3", 295 pounds, he is light for a tackle, especially in these days when some teams are looking for 330-pounders capable of stopping up the Holland Tunnel. His primary goal is to rush the passer. And it helps that he has Mark Anderson with him. And Adewale Ogunleye. And Alex Brown. They can all reach the quarterback quickly — and angrily.

Fewell, who came to the Bills in '06 from Chicago but also spent time with the Rams, knows the value of having plenty of people capable of rushing the passer. The Bills have Aaron Schobel, who notched 14 sacks last year, and Chris Kelsay had 5.5. That's a good start, but Fewell knows he needs more.

"When I went to St. Louis, we had two guys who could really rush the passer, Leonard Little and Grant Wistrom," Fewell says. "In Chicago, we had Tommie Harris, Alex Brown and Adewale Ogunleye. In Tampa's best days, they had Sapp and Rice and a couple other guys who could do it. You need that."

Of course, while those guys are concentrating on getting to the passer, and teams are focusing on finding good rushers, opponents will attempt to grind it out. That can defuse the Cover 2 by forcing a safety to come up. So, the linemen have to be flexible. "And they have to play two-gap football," Kiffin says. That means they can't just go straight ahead. They have to control both sides of the man in front of them, the better to slow things down and give the linebackers and safeties time to get to the ballcarrier. It's a tough double duty for a lineman to handle, especially since the best pass rushers aren't always the biggest players. Schobel, for instance, weighs all of 243 pounds, while Kelsay checks in at 261.

THE SECOND LINE

Back in 2004, Kansas City defensive coordinator Gunther Cunningham decided to play Cover 2. He knew the system. He had experienced success with it. Great idea, right?

It took one game for him to realize he hadn't exactly chosen wisely. In that contest, the Chiefs' left outside linebacker missed seven tackles. The middle man botched six, and the right outside backer failed six more times. Needless to say, K.C. lost. Over time, things got better, especially at linebacker. "What Cover 2 does is, it teaches you to be disciplined and tough," Cunningham says. "Those are two prerequisites for any defense: be tough and be disciplined."

The Chiefs head into '07 with a revamped linebacking corps designed to handle the work Cover 2 schemes mandate. They must be able to tackle. They have to be quick to recognize running plays, as well as when a quarterback checks down to a back in passing situations. And they have to be tough. Done, done and done.

Not that the Chiefs were horrible last year. They finished tied for 11th in scoring defense and surrendered only 18 passing touchdowns, tied for ninth in the league.

Cunningham hopes this year's crop of linebackers will improve that figure. New middle man Napoleon Harris is a big reason why. Unlike last year's starter, Kawika Mitchell (now with the Giants), who was an excellent run-stuffer but not too athletic, Harris is quick and able to range all over the field. That's the ideal profile for the Cover 2 linebacker, who must be able to sprint down the center of the field in coverage. The speedy Harris can do that. Want more proof that he's right for the job? The other team looking for his services was Tampa Bay.

"The Mike linebacker has to be the quarterback of the defense," Fewell says. "He has to diagnose the run and be quick enough to flip his hips and get downfield."

The outside linebackers have to be fast, too. "Our linebackers aren't too big," Kiffin says. "We look more for speed there." It's easy to see why. Not only do the outside men have to close quickly on backs who catch check-down passes, but they also need to react decisively inside.

For instance, suppose a receiver is running a fade route, and the tight end is hooking up 10 yards downfield. The corner is on the outside man, jamming him, while the middle linebacker is dropping into the deep middle part of the field. So, the quarterback is going to throw to the tight end. The cornerback will see that and react, but he won't always get there in time.

That puts it on the outside linebacker, who has to diagnose the play and close quickly from the back side. All this after recognizing pass to begin with and dropping into coverage to protect the outside. Heavy-legged players need not apply.

PASSING INTERESTS

It's an elusive thing, up there with Sasquatch, the Loch Ness Monster and intelligent network TV. Some NFL personnel execs spend their careers looking for it but never succeed.

It's the "shutdown corner," and for all the talk about the precious commodity, it just doesn't exist in too many pro football outposts. Outside of Denver's Champ Bailey and perhaps a few others, there isn't really anybody capable of locking onto an opposing wide receiver for the entire game and keeping him hungry. It's just too hard to do. That's another reason why the Cover 2 is so popular. Instead of placing considerable man-to-man burdens on the cornerbacks, it asks them to perform a few vital tasks within the framework of a support system designed to keep mistakes to a minimum. That doesn't mean the corners get a pass. Just like Cover 2 teams are looking for specific kinds of linebackers, so too do they need corners with particular skill sets. They may not have to be constant shadows, but they must be strong enough to take on blockers in running situations and inhibit receivers' abilities to release from the line on passing downs. Oh, and it helps if they can play some man-to-man.

"We're looking for physical corners who can play the run and jam those receivers," Fewell says. "But it's a misconception that we don't look for cover corners. That's also critical."

Cover 2 corners are asked to stuff receivers at the line but still run with them on deep outside routes. They have safety help in the event of post patterns or anything that leads to the middle of the field, but they still must prevent intermediate and long passes. Oh, and should the quarterback throw to someone in the flat, corners must recognize the move quickly and charge back to make a sure tackle. Teams running the scheme may not have to find man-to-man specialists, but they must have physical, quick outside men, not the easiest species to locate, either. That's why Tampa Bay is so happy to have Ronde Barber, who is speedy and a big hitter.

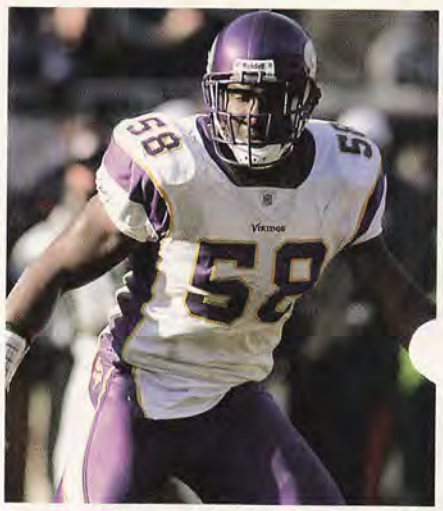
The Bucs also loved it when they had John Lynch. Safeties have perhaps the most fun job of anybody in the Cover 2. They set up 10-15 yards away from the line of scrimmage and have a running start into just about every play, whether they're supporting the run or meting out high-speed punishment on deep or over-the-middle passes. It's not all fun, because they have heavy pass-defense responsibilities; anything deep down the middle is headed toward them, no matter how swift the middle linebacker might be. If someone catches a deep post, that's on them. If an intermediate crossing route is completed, the safeties had better be able to close in quickly and make the tackle.

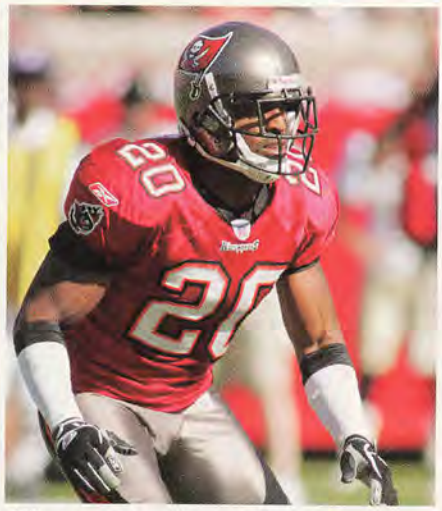
And safeties had better be masters of disguise. In fact, the entire defensive backfield must have the capacity to fool opponents. Teams may use Cover 2 as their "shell" or base defense, but they'll do plenty of things out of it. Sometimes, they'll play "quarters," in which all four defensive backs drop into coverage, with each taking a quarter of the field. Linebackers and/or nickel backs handle the underneath stuff. Cover 2 teams play their share of man defense, too. They blitz from all angles. But they often do it from a pre-snap look that looks just like their classic Cover 2.

"It's a misconception that we play it all the time," Kiffin says. "We play other defenses, too. We don't play (Cover 2) as much as people think."

Maybe. Or, perhaps he is bluffing. With so many teams playing Cover 2 variations, perhaps the old master is looking for an edge.

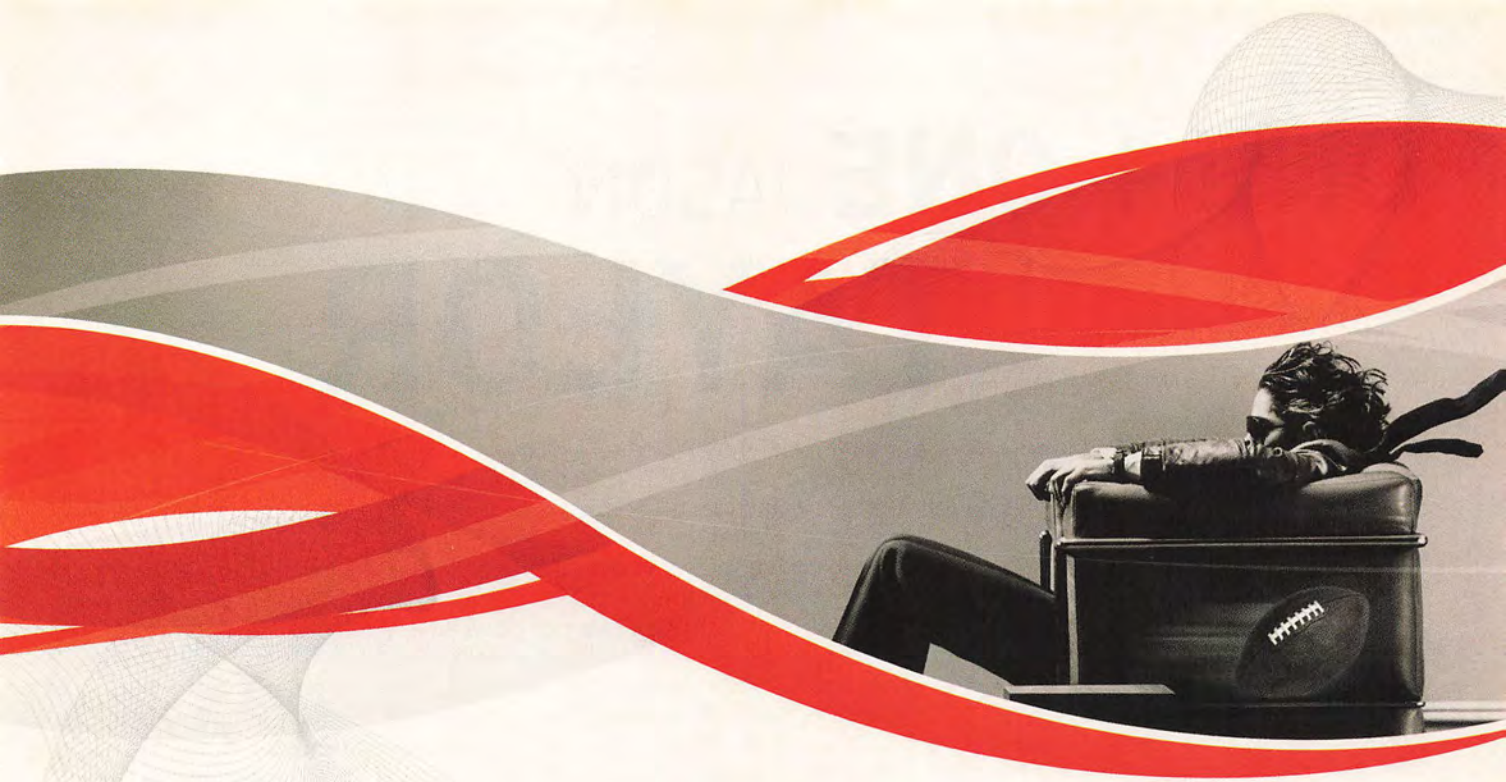
Let the offense beware. Still.





Napoleon Harris, making the move from Minnesota to Kansas City this season, fits the blueprint for a Cover 2 linebacker — fast and athletic — while speedy, physical Ronde Barber is the ideal corner.

Harris: Scott Boehm/ Getty Images
Barber: Tim Clark/Allsion Sports



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ONE + ONE JASON TAYLOR

Not bad for a skinny kid from Akron.

A third-round pick in 1997, defensive end Jason Taylor is now, along with brother-in-law Zach Thomas, one of only two Dolphins remaining from the last millennium.

He's also among the most dominant players in the NFL, that status validated by his selection as the 2006 Defensive Player of the Year. He is a potential Hall of Famer, with five Pro Bowl selections, 106 career sacks (third among active players) and seven defensive touchdowns (tied for the most by a defensive lineman in NFL history). He is an emerging businessman, a part-time model and actor and an active philanthropist, with his Jason Taylor Foundation for children sponsoring celebrity golf and ping-pong tournaments and hosting regular inspirational sports movie nights.

He is everything but a champion, having missed the playoffs the last five seasons, and never experiencing as much as an AFC Championship game. So he'll spend 2007 doing the same thing he has for a decade: chasing quarterbacks, and postseason glory, on every snap.

Athlon Sports: You'll be 33 by the start of this season. Why are you improving with age?

Jason Taylor: I don't know. I guess my affinity for wine; I'm kind of copying wine. The more experience you get, if you see things through a different light, you play smarter. I've had great teammates, and I know people think that's just the politically correct thing to say, but I've had great teammates who have made my job a lot easier. I think the system change the last couple of years has helped me. I've been able to do some different things and get away from some of the pounding. I'm not playing in the three-point stance all the time. And at the end of the day, I'm always willing to outwork somebody. And if you play harder than somebody else, you're going to have success.

AS: What's the best advice another athlete gave you?

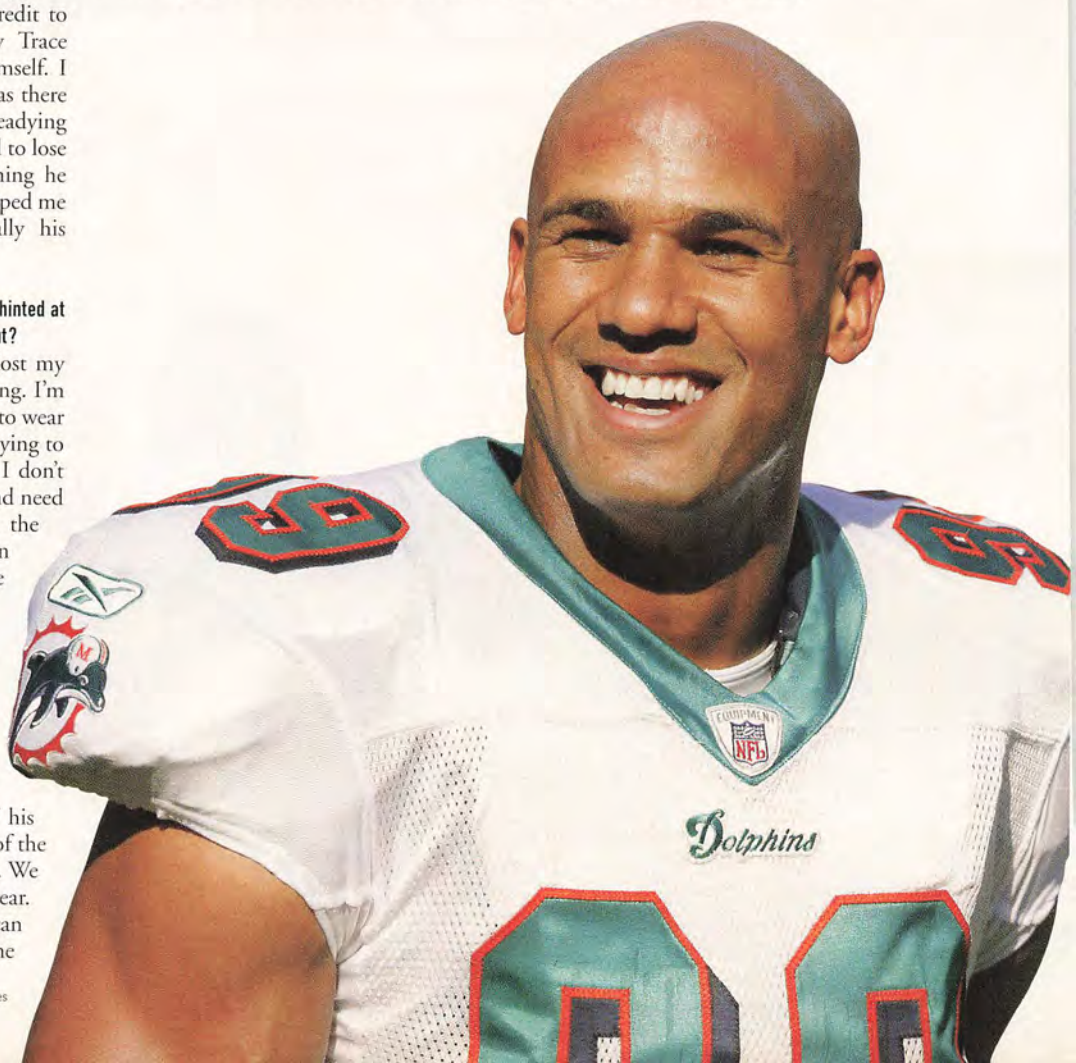
JT: I probably have to give a lot of credit to Trace Armstrong. Watching the way Trace prepared himself, and took care of himself. I had a tough year in 1999, and Trace was there to help me through it and be that steadying force when I was getting down. I started to lose some confidence, and that was one thing he said you can never lose. I think Trace helped me more through his example than really his words.

AS: After the last game of the 2006 season, you hinted at retirement, but you're back. What was that about?

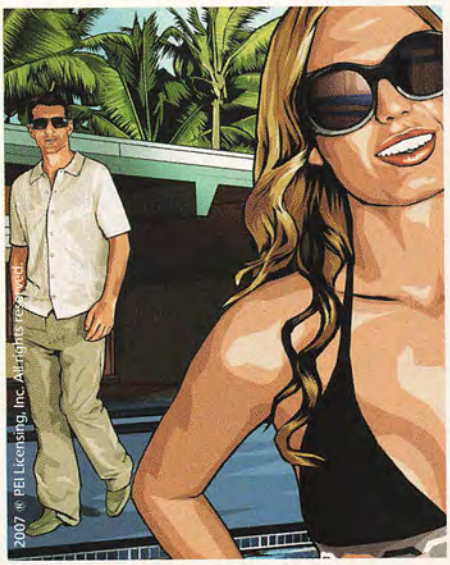
JT: I love the game, so it's not like I lost my passion to play football. I don't like losing. I'm a sore loser, get grumpy and all. It starts to wear on you. With that being said, I'm not trying to have people feel sorry for me, because I don't deserve that. I'm part of the problem, and need to be part of the solution and not the problem. I'm sure when it's time to turn the lights on and kick it off again, I'll be ready.

AS: What did you think of the hiring of Cam Cameron?

JT: It's great that we got an offensive-minded coach. So, hopefully, he can help us put some points on the board and win some football games. We still got Dom Capers and the majority of his defensive staff, and I think Dom is one of the best in the league at doing what he does. We should have a darn good defense next year. So if we can score some points, and we can play better defensively, we can get some



Joe Robbins/Getty Images



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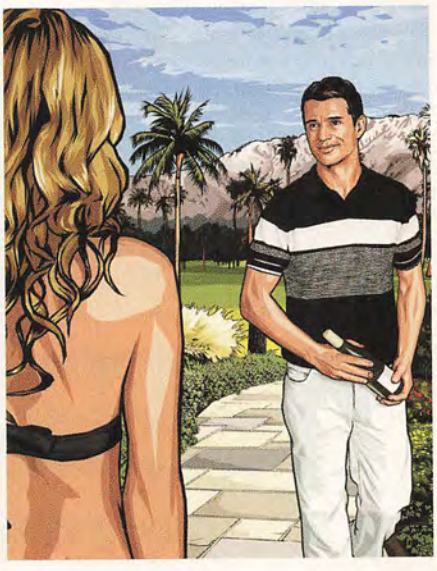


PERRY ELLIS

PerryEllis.com

things turned around. Everybody knows how much I like the defense now. And I think there are more things Dom wants to do. Talking to him since the season ended, there's more that we can do, there's more he wants to do, spread our wings a little bit and mix some things up a little more.

AS: How does Cameron's style differ from that of Nick Saban?
JT: It's a different style of teaching. It's more calm in teaching and not the rah-rah and undressing sometimes, cursing up one side and down the other. Cam has a different way of doing things. There's a lot of different ways to get it done. With that being said, we'll see how much better it is or how much worse it is later on in the year.

AS: Has it sunk in that you were named the Defensive Player of the Year?
JT: I really don't think it has, all the way. I don't think about it a whole lot. People remind you all the time. If you sit down and think about the great names in this league and the guys who have played the game the way it's supposed to be played at a high level, it's definitely an honor. And 10 years ago, coming from Akron, I would never have thought that. I remember being at Akron, as a senior, telling my buddies, "Man, I'd get on the practice squad. If I could get three or four grand a week on the practice squad, I'd love to do it. Or cover kicks or whatever." And to be in this position now is great. You look at guys like Zach (Thomas) and (Brian) Urlacher and Shawne Merriman, some of the great defensive players in this game, and to be picked above those guys is an honor.

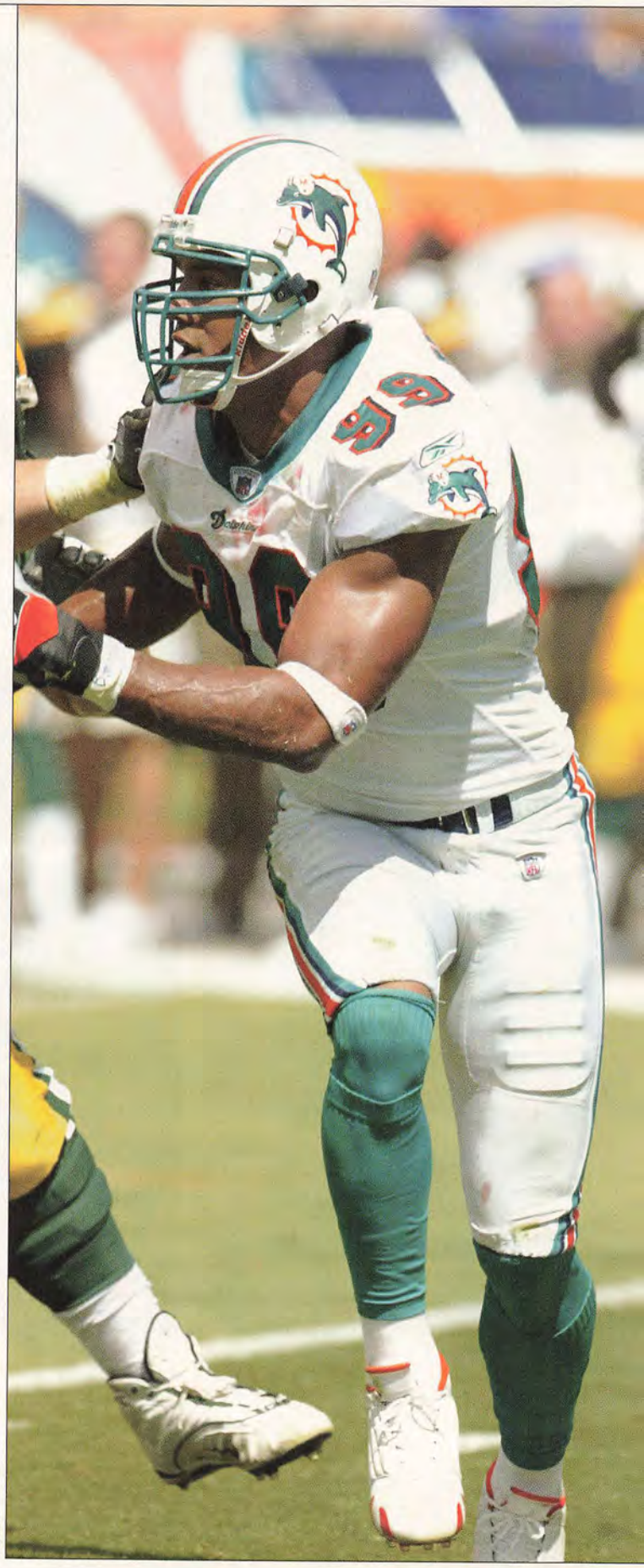
AS: You said that Merriman shouldn't be eligible for postseason awards because he had been suspended for violating the league's steroid policy. Then you played with him at a Pro Bowl. How did that go?
JT: We talked for a little while. He understood where I was coming from and I understood him being upset with the perception of what I had said. But he read the transcripts of what I had said originally and he understood.

AS: What would you like your legacy to be?
JT: You can't really create your legacy. You can sit down and think about how you would like to be perceived and what kind of player you are going to be, what kind of person you are going to be, but at the end of the day, your legacy just becomes based on what you do. Hopefully, I would like people to remember me for what I am, a 235-pound, 240-pound defensive end — slash-linebacker late in his career — that brought it. And hopefully I have been able to amaze some people by doing it at that size. I think that's the biggest thing I'm proud of, to be so undersized and walk around in public and people say there's no way he can do it. But when the ball's snapped, I think I'm a pretty bad guy.

AS: You associate with famous athletes in other sports. What do those guys say to you?
JT: I've had so many guys say positive things. Like a Michael Jordan or a Lawrence Taylor, who I see a good bit at golf events, or Scottie Pippen or Charles Barkley, some of the all-time greats in what they do. When you have guys like that, that have an appreciation for what you do or a respect for you, and are fans of the game and know ... and say, "Damn, you're a bad sumbitch." That really validates a lot.

AS: Who's the one guy, in any sport, you'd like as a teammate?
JT: Tom Brady.

AS: Why Brady?
JT: Why not? I mean, look at the man. The way he competes, his will to win, the way he leads and carries everybody with him, makes things happen. He's a clutch player. When the crap's on the line, he gets it done. And he's a winner. At the end of the day, the man knows how to win, and has won many championships.



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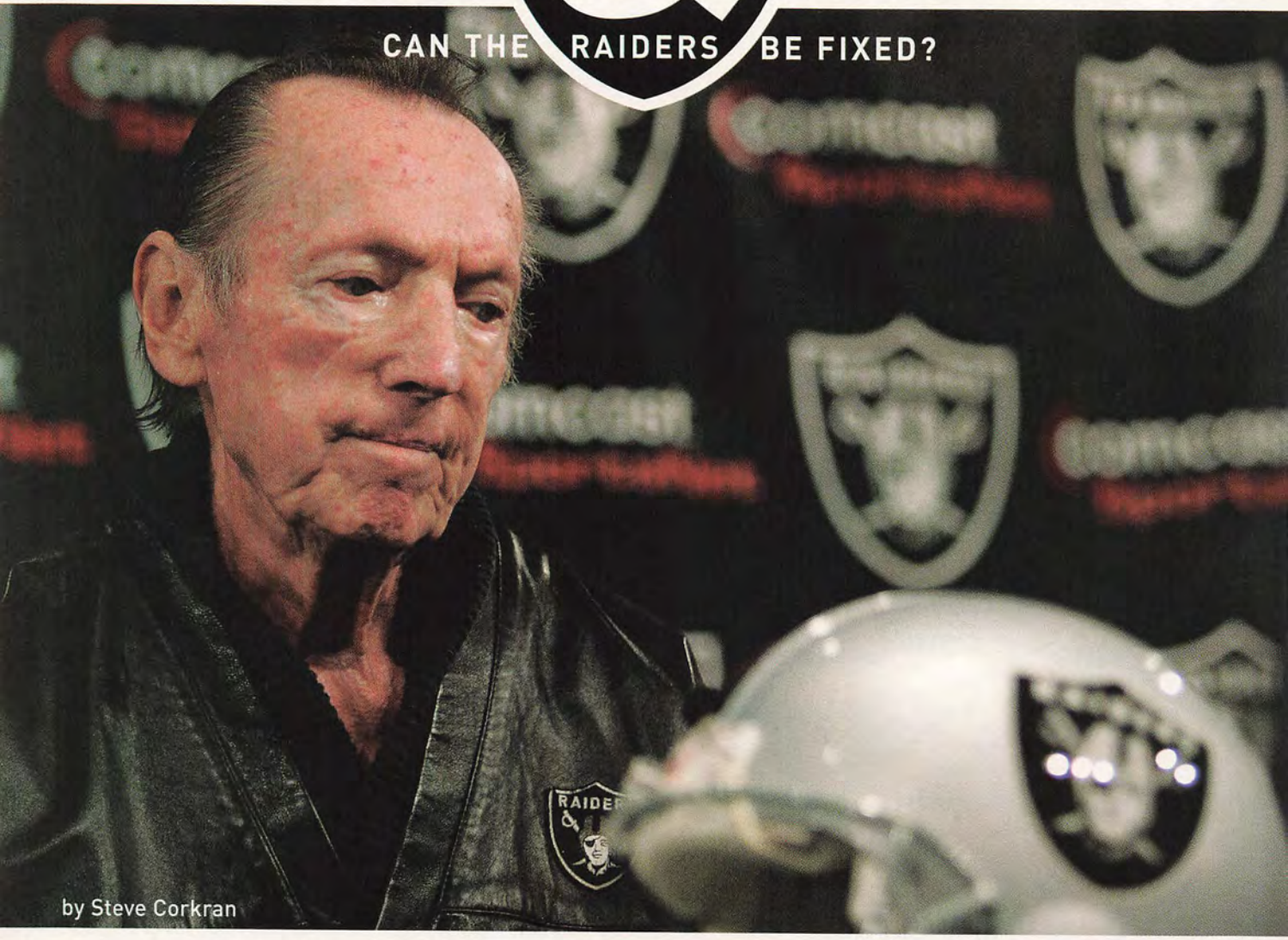

by Steve Corkran

One starting wide receiver was banished before the season started. The other was allowed to play even though he admitted oftentimes he felt it difficult to get motivated. The coach called out the team's highest-ranking personnel executive.

Welcome to the world of the Raiders, where the past always has been a huge part of their identity. Nowadays, the past is an inescapable reality for a team so desperate to forget what has transpired the past four seasons.

Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

Perhaps most memorable is the 2–14 season the Raiders forged last season, when they finished with the most losses in franchise history, scored a league-worst 168 points — on only 12 offensive touchdowns — allowed a league-worst 72 sacks and earned the top pick in the NFL Draft for the first time in managing general partner Al Davis' long and storied history.

"I realized, as time went on, as the events passed, that this year of infamy is one that belongs to all of us who were part of the Raiders in 2006," Davis said at a news conference in January. "It was a tough year. It was week by week and it hurt. As time went on, I realized, or at least I felt that we have to go in a different direction. We have to move the clock back."

Man, if only it were that easy. If so, Davis no doubt would rewind the clock to mid-day on that Friday, two days or so before his Raiders played the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in Super Bowl XXXVII in San Diego. At some point that day, starting center Barret Robbins went AWOL. He resurfaced the next day after a night of drinking and Lord knows what else, in no shape to play in the biggest game of his life, and the franchise's biggest game in 19 years.

The pounding administered by the Buccaneers made it too simplistic and convenient to blame the loss on Robbins' absence. However, several players said the timing of the incident had a devastating effect upon the Raiders.

Some might say the Raiders still haven't recovered. The losses just keep coming. No team has lost more than the Raiders the past four seasons. Their 15–49 record is the worst four-year run in franchise history.

Heck, lifelong assistant coach Rod Marinelli and journeyman quarterback Josh McCown joined the Detroit Lions of all teams after meeting with the Raiders about employment opportunities before the 2006 season. Ouch.

It wasn't long ago that people began wondering whether the game had passed Davis by, if he had become too stuck in his silver-and-black ways — no gray there — and was too inflexible to adapt to the new-age NFL.

Then came the 2002 season, when the Raiders rode the red-hot arm of quarterback Rich Gannon all the way to their first Super Bowl since the 1983 season. Suddenly, the questions ceased about Davis' eye for talent, his skill in free agency and the NFL Draft and shrewd trades.

Today, though, everyone is wondering about Davis' grip on a franchise he once coached more than four decades ago. Part of that stems from decisions either made or approved of by Davis the past five years or so. Consider:

• Davis traded coach Jon Gruden to the Buccaneers for the rights to two first- and two second-round draft picks as well as $8 million after the 2001 season. Gruden thanked his former boss by guiding the Buccaneers to a 48–21 victory over the Raiders in the Super Bowl less than a year later. Bill Callahan succeeded Gruden and lasted one year beyond his Super Bowl season. Former Raiders wide receiver Tim Brown said he had to prevent teammates from going after Callahan several times throughout the 2003 season. Failed Washington Redskins coach Norv Turner pocketed nine victories in 32 games before getting canned after two seasons. Raiders Pro Football Hall of Fame offensive lineman Art Shell flamed out in his second stint coaching the Raiders after one season and two victories.

• Davis trotted out quarterbacks Kerry Collins and Aaron Brooks during the past three seasons rather than selecting from the likes of Ben Roethlisberger, Philip Rivers, Matt Leinart and Jay Cutler when he had the chance in recent drafts. Finally, he used the first pick in this year's draft on LSU quarterback JaMarcus Russell, the first quarterback drafted in the first round by the Raiders since Todd Marinovich in 1991.

• Davis traded the rights to the No. 7 pick in the 2005 NFL Draft, starting middle linebacker Napoleon Harris — drafted No. 23 in 2002 — and a seventh-rounder for controversial receiver Randy Moss before the 2005 season. Moss looked nothing like the player who dominated the league in his seven seasons with the Minnesota Vikings and everything like the player who commanded only a fourth-round pick in a trade with the New England Patriots this past April. Moss seemingly made more news for his almost-weekly criticism of the Raiders on his national radio gig last season than he did for his on-field performance. He railed against Shell's treatment of the veterans, the length of practices and called things "fishy" before the regular-season opener.

Through it all, Shell let Moss have a free pass; whereas he suspended Joey Porter four games — it later was reduced to two games on appeal — for conduct detrimental to the team early in the season and benched him for most of the 14 other games.

Players viewed that as inconsistent treatment by Shell and sided with Porter. At one point, Brooks looked around the locker room, shook his head and asked, "What the hell have I gotten into?"

Davis' use of a walker and the obvious deterioration of his physical appearance also have fueled speculation that the man who once was the AFL Coach of the Year, the AFL Commissioner and the architect of three Super Bowl-winning teams no longer is as sharp as he once was.

Nonsense, say those closest to Davis, who turns 78 on July 4.

"Sure, he's not as spry as he once was," a person in the front office says, "but he hasn't lost a bit mentally. He doesn't move around the way he used to, but his mind is as sharp as ever."

He still watches videotape from every practice session throughout the year. He still presides over the team's draft operations. And, yes, he still lets his coaches have it at all hours of the night, if the mood so strikes him.

"We haven't done well," Davis says. "And that's the idea of this (latest coaching change). … We're going to try to get it back, and we will get it back. And we can win, and we will win."

Still, there are those who question whether the Raiders would be better off with a leadership change, a fresh face leading the organization for the first time since 1963.

"Mr. Davis isn't going anywhere, so (people) can forget about that notion," Raiders chief executive Amy Trask says. "The game hasn't passed him by, and he still has the passion to run this thing in the same capacity he has for more than four decades. He is working just as hard these days to restore the Raiders to their glory."

But are his high-profile moves working as well as he hopes? Davis' latest head-scratching move came when he tabbed little-known Lane Kiffin as the successor to Shell in late January. Kiffin, 32, is the youngest coach in NFL history and someone who has only one year of NFL experience. Kiffin said he was sold on Davis' commitment to winning from the first time they met in mid-January.

"The first time I ever met him, and sat with him for an hour and a half, I realized he has a great commitment to this program and he has the want to win and he's going to do what it takes to win, whether it's players, or coaches, or money. Whatever it is, he wants to win," Kiffin says.

Now, Kiffin is being asked to coach players older than he is, such as defensive tackle Warren Sapp, as well as breathe back life into a franchise that has gone from The Team of the Decades to the Team of the Decayed in about as long as it takes Davis to decide which colors to wear each morning.

By all accounts, Davis has given Kiffin a fair amount of autonomy over coaching hires and personnel moves. So far, anyway. Davis did the same with Shell last season and rued the day once he found the offensive game plans concocted by former bed and breakfast owner Tom Walsh indigestible.

Just the same, Kiffin has populated his staff with 16 new assistants, most of them young, hungry and enthusiastic to show that they belong.

Porter spent most of last season in Shell's doghouse as a result of an offseason meeting that ended with Shell booting Porter out of his office for not buying into the new regime. Porter says Kiffin and his assistants have provided something that has been missing since the Gruden days, when Gruden openly sparred with players, sometimes participated in full-squad drills but always spoke their language.

"It's welcome," Porter says of Kiffin's boundless energy and resolve to move on without looking back. "Anything different from what we had before is a welcome change. It's a breath of fresh air. It's a good thing."

Kiffin also orchestrated the move that jettisoned Moss for a pick that turned into defensive back John Bowie, released incumbent quarterback Brooks and implemented a policy wherein players aren't held accountable for past transgressions. Fancy that — a Raiders coach not beholden to the past. Hey, it's a start.

Yet, even the most ardent Raiders are wary of being too optimistic, for they've seen too much in recent years.

"You got to get a little lucky at times, too, with this thing," defensive tackle Warren Sapp says. "The pieces are in place. If we can just get us a nice efficient way about how we go in week in and week out and do our thing, we should be fine."

Even the most optimistic assessments are couched with words such as "should." That's what four straight seasons of losing can do to a team that enters every season expecting to challenge for the Super Bowl and whose owner says, "We don't rebuild, we just reload."

Peter Brouillet

Yet, it's hard to blame the players for being so cautious in their enthusiasm. After all, this is a team that lost its first five games and its last nine, failed to win any games away from McAfee Coliseum or against the three other AFC West teams, and scored 19 fewer offensive touchdowns than San Diego Chargers running back LaDainian Tomlinson.

Furthermore, the Raiders have won as many as nine games only three times in the past 12 seasons, twice in Gruden's four years. They last won a Super Bowl 23 seasons ago, and the once-rabid fan base has disintegrated into 30,000 or so diehards who refuse to believe that things won't change sooner rather than later.

Things got so bad during the 2006 debacle that Shell called out senior personnel executive Michael Lombardi for undermining Shell's authority. He referred to Lombardi as a "fox in the hen house." The strained relationship emanated from Lombardi wanting former Louisville coach Bobby Petrino to succeed Turner and not Shell.

Lombardi didn't attend practice all season, and he was prohibited from speaking to Shell. Davis fired Lombardi a little more than four months after he canned Shell. Is it any wonder the Raiders are perceived as being so dysfunctional?

The sentiment around the NFL is that the Raiders are far from emerging from their prolonged funk. Evidence can be found in prospective coaches such as Petrino spurning the Raiders in favor of the Atlanta Falcons, Ken Whisenhunt choosing the Arizona Cardinals job over the Raiders, and others saying thanks but no thanks without even interviewing.

Through it all, the Raiders still have been able to attract top-tier free agents such as Sapp, defensive end Derrick Burgess, and running backs LaMont Jordan and Dominic Rhodes in recent seasons. Davis remains steadfast in his belief that success is just around the corner. He said as much during an impromptu locker room interview late last season.

"What I say to you is: five decades, five Super Bowls, four head coaches, four different quarterbacks. I want to win. Obviously in life, I like certain things. I like beautiful women more than unbeautiful women. I'm not in any way demeaning the unbeautiful women. I want to win, and I will win, and we will win for the Raiders, and we'll get this thing straightened out."

As for what ails him personally, Davis has said little, other than: "It's tough. No one seems to have an answer."

He might as well have been talking about his team.

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1997 DRAFT REVISITED

by Ethan Skolnick

Photos by Bruce Schwartzman

1. ORLANDO PACE, T, OHIO STATE, ST. LOUIS RAMS

'97-present, St. Louis

Career: The master of the pancake block proved worthy of his No. 1 overall draft selection. A surefire Hall of Famer. Earned his first of seven Pro Bowl invitations after only his third season. Anchored the offensive line that facilitated one of the best offenses in NFL history, and got a ring (Super Bowl XXXIV) in the bargain. Missed final 7.5 games of 2006 due to a torn triceps.

Now: Starting at left tackle for St. Louis, as always.

2. DARRELL RUSSELL, DT, USC, OAKLAND RAIDERS

'97-01, Oakland; '03, Washington

Career: Two-time Pro Bowler finished career with 28.5 sacks. Could have been a great one, but his career was largely a disappointment because of off-the-field troubles. Suspended for four games in 2001 for failing to comply with the league's drug policy, one of his seven violations. Missed one-and-a-half seasons before returning to the NFL with Washington in 2003. Spent time in Tampa Bay's camp in 2004.

Now: Died during a high-speed crash in December 2005. He was a passenger with former USC teammate Michael Bastianelli.

3. SHAWN SPRINGS, CB, OHIO STATE, SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

'97-03, Seattle; '04-present, Washington

Career: Recorded seven interceptions in his second season, which earned him Pro Bowl honors, and has 27 in all. Had a team-leading six sacks in his first season with the Redskins, after signing as a free agent in 2004. His father Ron played for the Cowboys and recently received a kidney transplant from former teammate Everson Walls.

Now: Returns to Redskins after an injury-plagued season, but may be nearing the end.

4. PETER BOULWARE, LB, FLORIDA STATE, BALTIMORE RAVENS

'97-05, Baltimore

Career: The Associated Press' Defensive Rookie of the Year in 1997, when he had 12 sacks. Made four Pro Bowls, won Super Bowl XXXV and set a franchise career record for sacks. The Ravens released him in 2005 but then signed him to a smaller salary.

Now: Retired, and lives in Tallahassee, Fla. Recently named to the Ravens' Ring of Honor, the first player drafted by the Baltimore franchise to receive that honor. His brother Michael is a safety for the Seahawks.

5. BRYANT WESTBROOK, CB, TEXAS, DETROIT LIONS

'97-01, Detroit; '02, Dallas, Green Bay

Career: Six of his 13 interceptions came in 2000, and he returned one of those for a 101-yard touchdown. A hard hitter in college, but he couldn't avoid injuries at the next level. An Achilles' tendon tear essentially spelled the end. The Cowboys cut him after a critical penalty in the 2002 season opener.

Now: Retired.

6. WALTER JONES, T, FLORIDA STATE, SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

'97-present, Seattle

Career: Peers and analysts widely consider him the premier offensive lineman in the NFL. Some consider him the league's best player at any position. Headed for the Hall of Fame. Six-time Pro Bowler. Has it all: agility, power, foot speed, great hands. Anchored the unit that led the Seahawks to their Super Bowl XL appearance, clearing the way for Shaun Alexander's record-setting running. Played in all 16 games during the 2006 season, though much of it was while injured.

Now: In his usual spot, protecting Matt Hasselbeck's blind side.

7. IKE HILLIARD, WR, FLORIDA, N.Y. GIANTS

'97-04, N.Y. Giants; '05-present, Tampa Bay

Career: Productive target known for his toughness, though he has never been much of a breakaway threat. Suffered a neck injury in the second game of his NFL career, and missed the rest of the season. Had a career year in 1999, with 72 catches for 996 yards. Scored 14 total touchdowns in 2000 and 2001, and reached Super Bowl XXXV as a complement to Amani Toomer. Only two starts over the past two seasons.

Now: A Buccaneers reserve receiver.

8. JAMES FARRIOR, LB, VIRGINIA, N.Y. JETS

'97-01, N.Y. Jets; '02-present, Pittsburgh

Career: A defensive quarterback with a knack for run-stopping. "Potsie" has played in 152 of a possible 160 games, accumulating 641 tackles, 14.5 sacks and nine interceptions. Posted six tackles for the Super Bowl XL champion Steelers. Made the Pro Bowl for his play in 2004.

Now: The veteran of the linebacking crew, now that Joey Porter is a Dolphin.

9. TOMMY KNIGHT, CB, IOWA, ARIZONA CARDINALS

'97-01, Arizona; '03, Baltimore

Career: Started 14 games as a rookie but struggled with injuries thereafter, and had only three career interceptions, two of those in 1999. Arizona fared better in the second round, taking quarterback Jake Plummer. The Rams cut Knight loose in 2004.

Now: Lives in Arizona.

10. CHRIS NAEOLE, G, COLORADO, NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

'97-01, New Orleans; '02-present, Jacksonville

Career: The first guard chosen in the top 10 since 1983, and he hasn't disappointed. No starts as a rookie because of a knee injury, but 142 since. Physical, durable player. The Hawaii-born 330-pounder was the Jaguars' only offensive player to play every snap in 2003.

Now: Still the Jaguars' right guard.

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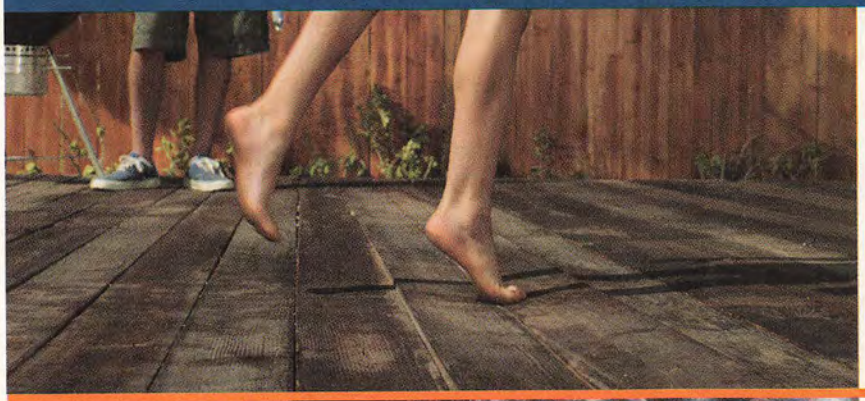

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11. MICHAEL BOOKER, CB, NEBRASKA, ATLANTA FALCONS
'97-99, Atlanta; '00-01, Tennessee

Career: Bump-and-run cornerback started in Super Bowl XXXIII but never did enough to validate his draft status. Finished with eight interceptions. Admitted later that he didn't enjoy playing professionally as much as he enjoyed playing in college.

Now: He owns and operates businesses in Dallas (where he lives) and Lincoln, Neb.

12. WARRICK DUNN, RB, FLORIDA STATE, TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS
'97-01, Tampa Bay; '02-present, Atlanta

Career: Has gotten better with age. Started as the speedy complement to Mike Alstott, and then emerged as a dynamic feature back. Has gone over 1,000 yards in five seasons, has made three Pro Bowls, and has a career average of 4.2 yards per carry. Also one of the NFL's most charitable players, earning the Walter Payton Man of the Year Award in 2005.

Now: Doing good work on and off the field.

13. TONY GONZALEZ, TE, CALIFORNIA, KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
'97-present, Kansas City

Career: The former Cal basketball player became arguably the top tight end of his era. Headed to the Hall of Fame. Career totals of 721 catches and 61 touchdowns, and could hold every tight end record before he is done. In 2004, he caught 102 passes, the most ever by a player at his position. His only failure was his tryout for the NBA's Miami Heat (though he did make the summer league roster).

Now: Signed a new-five year extension in January 2007.

14. REINARD WILSON, DE, FLORIDA STATE, CINCINNATI BENGALS
'97-02, Cincinnati

Career: Moved to outside linebacker for his first three seasons, before moving back to defensive end. Led the Bengals with nine sacks in 2001, then went sackless in 16 appearances in 2002. Signed with Tampa Bay but didn't stick.

Now: Retired.

15. YATIL GREEN, WR, MIAMI, MIAMI DOLPHINS
'97-99, Miami

Career: An attractive package of size and speed, he fell victim to the same thing that limited him in college: injuries. On the first day of 1997 training camp, he tore up his right knee. Then he tore it up again in a non-contact drill the next year. Suited up for eight games in 1999 and caught 18 passes for 234 yards and no touchdowns.

Now: Lives in Florida.

16. REIDEL ANTHONY, WR, FLORIDA, TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS
'97-01, Tampa Bay

Career: Smallish player had a decent second season, with 51 catches and seven touchdowns, but was inconsistent otherwise. His former college coach, Steve Spurrier, signed him in Washington in 2002, but he didn't make it past training camp.

Now: Receivers coach at Valdosta State in Georgia.

17. KENARD LANG, DE, MIAMI, WASHINGTON REDSKINS
'97-01, Washington; '02-05, Cleveland; '06-present, Denver

Career: Steady, sturdy, versatile player has recorded 50 sacks while playing 153 of a possible 160 games. Played some outside linebacker in a 3-4 scheme in Cleveland. Has played in only three playoff games, missing out last season when the Broncos lost to San Francisco in the finale. Started a foundation in Orlando to benefit children from single-parent households, and those afflicted with cancer.

Now: Still in Denver's defensive line rotation.

18. KENNY HOLMES, DE, MIAMI, TENNESSEE OILERS
'97-00, Tennessee; '01-03, N.Y. Giants

Career: Steady, intense performer, with seven sacks as a rookie, and eight in two other seasons. The Titans gave him their Ed Block Courage Award in 2000, for the player who best exemplifies commitment to the principles of courage and sportsmanship. Had two sacks, seven pressures and a forced fumble in the Titans' postseason run to Super Bowl XXXIV.

Now: Lives in Vero Beach, Florida.

19. TARIK GLENN, T, CALIFORNIA, INDIANAPOLIS COLTS
'97-present, Indianapolis

Career: Cornerstone player who is a major reason Peyton Manning has so rarely been sacked. Started 16 games as a rookie, and has done the same in all but one season (missed six games in 2003). Rewarded for his service with a Super Bowl ring last postseason. Not bad for a player who played defensive tackle until his junior year at Cal.

Now: Returns as the Colts' left tackle.

20. DWAYNE RUDD, LB, ALABAMA, MINNESOTA VIKINGS
'97-00, Minnesota; '01-02, Cleveland, '03, Tampa Bay

Career: He had his moments, both good and bad. The good? He was a second-team All-Pro in 1998. The bad? He thought the Browns had recorded a game-winning sack against Kansas City's Trent Green, not realizing Green had released the ball. So he took off his helmet, earning an unsportsmanlike penalty that set up the Chiefs' game-winning field goal.

Now: Lives in Mississippi; hasn't played since Raiders released him in 2004.

All Photos: Bruce Schwartzman

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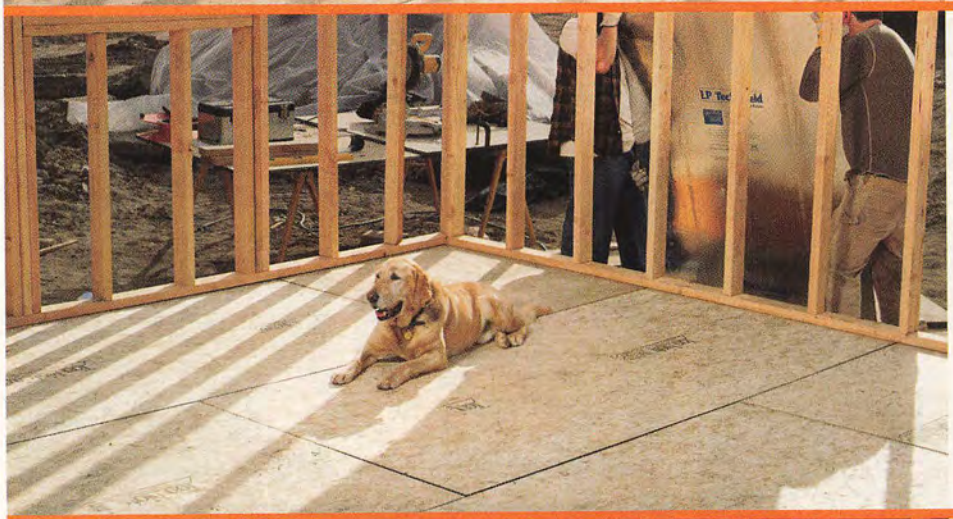

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21. RENALDO WYNN, DE, NOTRE DAME, JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

'97-01, Jacksonville; '02-present, Washington

Career: Great longevity considering that he has never had more than five sacks in any season. Credit his durability, consistency and leadership skills. Has played 152 of a possible 160 games. His teammates voted him a captain in 2003. Six career forced fumbles and five career fumble recoveries.

Now: Remains a veteran presence on the Redskins.

22. DAVID LAFLEUR, TE, LSU, DALLAS COWBOYS

'97-00, Dallas

Career: A huge target, at 6'7" and 280 pounds, he finished with 85 catches and 12 touchdowns. And he finished with a broken body, which included a chronically bad back. Even surgery to repair a herniated disk didn't help. The Cowboys wanted him so badly that they moved up to get him, giving up three picks. The Eagles turned one into linebacker Jeremiah Trotter.

Now: Lives in Louisiana, and is a part-owner and operator of 23 medical imaging facilities.

23. ANTOWAIN SMITH, RB, HOUSTON, BUFFALO BILLS

'97-00, Buffalo; '01-03, New England; '04, Tennessee; '05, New Orleans

Career: Physical runner twice topped 1,100 yards in a season, and had at least six touchdowns in five seasons. Rushed for 2,139 yards and 18 touchdowns during the regular seasons of 2001 and 2002 for championship Patriots teams, and started in both of those Super Bowl victories. Signed with the Houston Texans in 2006 but did not make the roster.

Now: A free agent.

24. CHAD SCOTT, CB, MARYLAND, PITTSBURGH STEELERS

'97-04, Pittsburgh; '05-present, New England

Career: Got off to a good start as a rookie, then missed the entire 1998 season with a torn left ACL. Hasn't made a Pro Bowl, but he's hung around and helped solidify the Patriots' banged-up secondary in 2006. Twenty-one career interceptions.

Now: Listed behind Ellis Hobbs on the Patriots' depth chart.

25. JON HARRIS, DE, VIRGINIA, PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

'97-98, Philadelphia

Career: Surprising choice who was projected as a middle-rounder. Overmatched in his first training camp, and never showed that he belonged. Traded to the Green Bay Packers for fellow former first-round flop John Michels. Two career sacks.

Now: Lives in Virginia.

26. JIM DRUCKENMILLER, QB, VIRGINIA TECH, SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

'97-98, San Francisco

Career: Strong-armed quarterback was a bad fit for the 49ers system, and then he couldn't stick anywhere else, flopping in a Dolphins tryout. Had a 29.2 passer rating, which included one touchdown pass. Later served as a backup for the Memphis Maniax of the XFL and the Los Angeles Avengers of the Arena Football League.

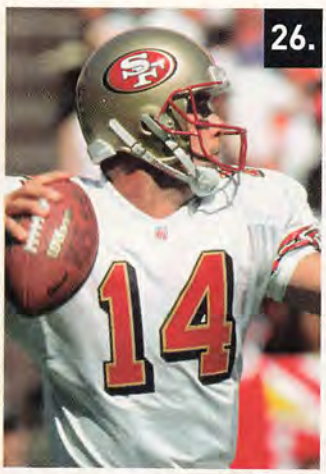
Now: Sales manager for a data brokering firm.

27. RAE CARRUTH, WR, COLORADO, CAROLINA PANTHERS

'97-99, Carolina

Career: One of the most notorious players in league history. Caught 44 passes as a rookie, but he'll always be remembered for the death of his girlfriend. Carruth was found guilty of conspiracy to commit murder, shooting into an occupied vehicle and using an instrument to destroy an unborn child. Was spared the death penalty.

Now: Serving a sentence of at least 18 years at Nash Correctional Institution near Raleigh, N.C. His projected release date is Oct. 22, 2018.



28. TREVOR PRYCE, DE, CLEMSON, DENVER BRONCOS

'97-05, Denver; '06-present, Baltimore

Career: Proved to be a great value choice, playing outside and inside, and recording 282 tackles and 77 sacks. Won two Super Bowls, anchoring the Broncos' defensive line. Made four Pro Bowls. Very durable — went more than four seasons without missing a game. Aging well. Was named to several All-Pro teams after recording 13 sacks for the Ravens in 2006.

Now: One of the Ravens' defensive captains.

29. CHRIS CANTY, CB, KANSAS STATE, NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

'97-98, New England; '99, Seattle; '00, New Orleans

Career: Not to be confused with the Cowboys defensive end of the same name. Four career interceptions. Not a good choice, when you consider the list of players selected in the second and third rounds, including Tiki Barber, Jamie Sharper, Darren Sharper, Jake Plummer, Corey Dillon and fellow cornerbacks Sam Madison and Ronde Barber.

Now: After playing in the Arena Football League, he recently played for the Rio Grande Valley (Texas) Dorados of the Arena Football League 2.

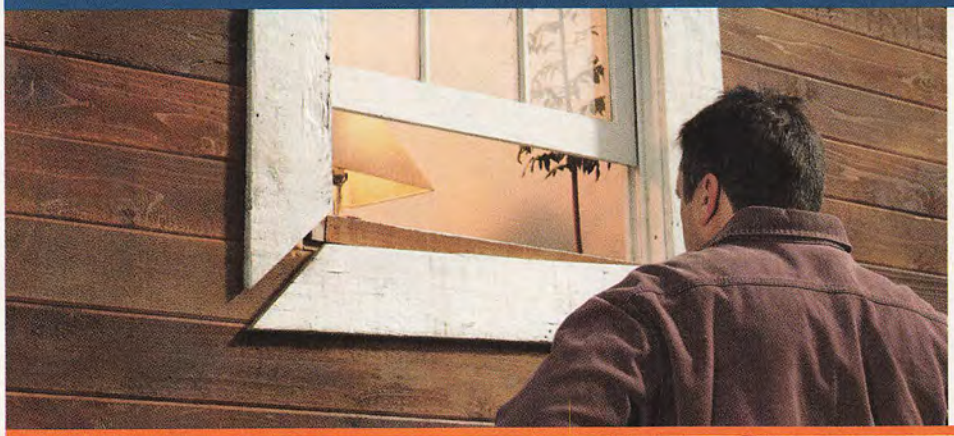
30. ROSS VERBA, T, IOWA, GREEN BAY PACKERS

'97-00, Green Bay; '01-05, Cleveland; '06, Detroit

Career: The first rookie to start a Super Bowl at left tackle, he had an up-and-down career, missing the entire 2003 season with a biceps injury. He came in the league talking about religion, but later became known for his partying (with Paris Hilton, among others).

Now: An NFL free agent. Arrested in January on a felony warrant for writing bad checks in Nevada but was eventually released and resolved an outstanding debt.

BEAUTY INSIDE OUT.



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NFC **PREDICTIONS**

NFC EAST

1. DALLAS COWBOYS
New sheriff in town must regain Romo-mentum for Super stars.

2. PHILADELPHIA EAGLES*
McNabb was Mc-MVP of Philly, now Kolb is QB of the future.

3. WASHINGTON REDSKINS
Entering fourth year of Gibbs' second term in nation's capital.

4. NEW YORK GIANTS
Tiki says good morning to Lauer, good riddance to Coughlin.

(NFC East teams play AFC East and NFC North in schedule rotation)

NFC NORTH

1. CHICAGO BEARS
Headed to Arizona if Turnover-saurus Rex is extinct. Otherwise...

2. GREEN BAY PACKERS
Favre enters 17th season after winning Super Bowl in sixth year.

3. DETROIT LIONS
Martz has talent and turf, but can he re-create the greatest show?

4. MINNESOTA VIKINGS
Peterson's purple reign starts behind Hutchinson and McKinnie.

(NFC North teams play AFC West and NFC East in schedule rotation)

NFC WEST

1. SEATTLE SEAHAWKS
Injury may prevent Alexander the Great from continuing to reign.

2. SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS
Gore's team heating up, now an inconvenient truth in division race.

3. ST. LOUIS RAMS
Action Jackson ready to follow Dickerson and Faulk in Rams history.

4. ARIZONA CARDINALS
Homefield advantage in Super Bowl, but playoffs not in the Cards.

(NFC West teams play AFC North and NFC South in schedule rotation)

NFC SOUTH

1. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS
Big Easy wants Mardi Gras gridiron party to last until February.

2. CAROLINA PANTHERS*
Ferocious defense ready to pounce on marching Saints for division.

3. ATLANTA FALCONS
Petrino hopes quarterback isn't Vick-tim of Commissioner's wrath.

4. TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS
Pewter pirates playing more like creamsicle swashbucklers of old.

(NFC South teams play AFC South and NFC West in schedule rotation)

* Wild Card

NFC CHAMPIONSHIP

DALLAS COWBOYS OVER CHICAGO BEARS

SUPER BOWL XLII – GLENDALE, ARIZ. – FEB. 3, 2008

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS OVER DALLAS COWBOYS

The Accuscore supercomputer stores years of NFL data and individually tracks how each player and team's performance and play calling strategies change in response to a variety of game conditions (over 20 environmental and matchup conditions). Accuscore uses this information to mathematically describe each player and team using over 100 different variables for each player. The computer then simulates each game one play at a time using these mathematical versions of each player and the rules of the NFL. After a single full game is simulated the computer repeats the process 10,000 times to generate the full range of possible results.

ACCUSCORE

WIN FORECAST	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
CHICAGO BEARS	0.0%	0.4%	2.2%	7.4%	13.3%	20.3%	20.2%	17.4%	11.2%	5.0%	1.9%	0.7%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
CAROLINA PANTHERS	0.0%	0.1%	0.7%	2.5%	7.2%	12.9%	19.4%	20.1%	18.1%	11.2%	5.5%	1.6%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
DALLAS COWBOYS	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	2.5%	7.7%	11.9%	18.6%	20.3%	16.7%	11.5%	6.4%	2.7%	1.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	1.4%	5.1%	10.7%	17.2%	19.4%	20.1%	13.0%	7.3%	3.8%	1.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	2.2%	6.3%	11.7%	14.9%	20.8%	19.0%	13.5%	7.4%	2.8%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	2.6%	6.4%	11.3%	18.4%	20.6%	18.0%	12.4%	6.0%	2.7%	0.8%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
ARIZONA CARDINALS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.0%	3.3%	8.9%	15.3%	18.9%	20.4%	16.0%	9.3%	4.4%	1.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
ST. LOUIS RAMS	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	1.3%	3.0%	8.5%	14.8%	18.4%	20.1%	16.3%	10.2%	4.6%	2.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
NEW YORK GIANTS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.7%	2.3%	6.9%	11.1%	18.2%	19.7%	19.1%	11.8%	6.8%	2.3%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	1.2%	2.9%	7.7%	13.1%	19.7%	21.9%	15.6%	10.0%	5.4%	1.6%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%
MINNESOTA VIKINGS	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	1.0%	2.6%	6.0%	12.0%	16.9%	20.2%	18.2%	12.9%	6.8%	2.5%	0.5%	0.2%	0.0%
WASHINGTON REDSKINS	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	2.3%	5.3%	9.8%	17.5%	20.1%	19.0%	14.0%	7.0%	3.2%	0.9%	0.2%	0.0%
GREEN BAY PACKERS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	1.1%	2.0%	6.0%	12.0%	17.2%	19.1%	19.2%	12.5%	7.5%	2.8%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
ATLANTA FALCONS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	1.6%	5.0%	9.8%	15.6%	19.7%	20.2%	14.4%	8.5%	3.5%	1.0%	0.2%	0.0%
DETROIT LIONS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	1.6%	3.9%	10.1%	14.5%	19.0%	21.2%	15.7%	8.6%	3.3%	1.2%	0.3%	0.0%
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.8%	3.2%	8.4%	13.5%	18.7%	19.9%	16.7%	11.2%	4.8%	2.1%	0.6%	0.0%

David Drapkin/Getty Images

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AFC **PREDICTIONS**

AFC EAST

1. NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS
Patriot Dynasty poised for fourth Super Bowl win in seven years.

2. NEW YORK JETS*
Man-genius has masterplan to turn J-E-T-S into division champs.

3. MIAMI DOLPHINS
Ghost of Marino worries Cameron less than Wannstedt and Saban.

4. BUFFALO BILLS
Loss of McGahee, Spikes, Fletcher-Baker and Clements hits hard.

(AFC East teams play NFC East and AFC North in schedule rotation)

AFC WEST

1. SAN DIEGO CHARGERS
New uniform and new coach, but hopefully the exact same L.T.

2. DENVER BRONCOS
Mile High expectations surround start of Cutler Era in Denver.

3. KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
Retirements and rumors aside, Chiefs will play the game to win.

4. OAKLAND RAIDERS
32-year-old coach and 22-year-old quarterback will grow together.

(AFC West teams play NFC North and AFC South in schedule rotation)

AFC NORTH

1. BALTIMORE RAVENS
Health of Ogden and McNair as critical as addition of McGahee.

2. CINCINNATI BENGALS
Ocho Cinco wants to play on Domingo Excelente in the desert.

3. PITTSBURGH STEELERS
Noll in '69; Cowher in '92; and now Tomlin takes over in 2007.

4. CLEVELAND BROWNS
Thomas and Quinn boost morale more than Browns' win total.

(AFC North teams play NFC West and AFC East in schedule rotation)

AFC SOUTH

1. INDIANAPOLIS COLTS
Super Bowl XLI champions aim to become ninth team to repeat.

2. JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS*
Teal Curtain defense may finally challenge for division supremacy.

3. TENNESSEE TITANS
Pacman problems and Madden's curse are sad songs in Music City.

4. HOUSTON TEXANS
After wrecking first Carr, six-year-old team hands keys to Schaub.

(AFC South teams play NFC South and AFC West in schedule rotation)

* Wild Card

AFC CHAMPIONSHIP

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS OVER SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

SUPER BOWL XLII – GLENDALE, ARIZ. – FEB. 3, 2008

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS OVER DALLAS COWBOYS

The Accuscore supercomputer stores years of NFL data and individually tracks how each player and team's performance and play calling strategies change in response to a variety of game conditions (over 20 environmental and matchup conditions). Accuscore uses this information to mathematically describe each player and team using over 100 different variables for each player. The computer then simulates each game one play at a time using these mathematical versions of each player and the rules of the NFL. After a single full game is simulated the computer repeats the process 10,000 times to generate the full range of possible results.

ACCUSCORE

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NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS	.2%	1.0%	3.7%	9.2%	17.1%	20.4%	19.4%	16.5%	8.0%	3.7%	.7%	.2%	.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	0%	.9%	2.9%	8.3%	17.1%	21.2%	20.5%	15.2%	8.0%	4.4%	1.2%	.4%	.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS	.2%	1.3%	5.2%	11.4%	17.6%	22.1%	19.5%	12.2%	6.2%	2.6%	1.3%	.3%	.0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS	0%	.5%	2.4%	7.0%	13.8%	19.2%	20.5%	17.4%	11.6%	4.8%	2.2%	.6%	.2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
BALTIMORE RAVENS	.1%	.4%	2.0%	7.2%	12.6%	18.6%	21.8%	16.3%	11.9%	5.8%	2.6%	.6%	.2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
PITTSBURGH STEELERS	0%	.1%	.5%	2.5%	5.2%	11.0%	18.8%	20.4%	18.2%	12.5%	7.4%	2.4%	.8%	.3%	0%	0%	0%
CINCINNATI BENGALS	0%	0%	.4%	1.7%	5.0%	9.8%	17.3%	19.5%	18.6%	13.4%	8.7%	3.8%	1.2%	.5%	0%	0%	0%
NEW YORK JETS	0%	.1%	.3%	1.0%	3.6%	9.6%	16.3%	20.2%	19.4%	14.6%	8.9%	3.8%	1.8%	.2%	.1%	0%	0%
DENVER BRONCOS	0%	0%	.3%	1.6%	4.6%	9.8%	16.6%	19.1%	19.0%	14.3%	9.1%	4.1%	1.2%	.3%	0%	0%	0%
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS	0%	0%	.3%	1.2%	3.6%	9.6%	14.4%	19.4%	20.6%	15.5%	9.0%	4.3%	1.4%	.4%	.2%	0%	0%
MIAMI DOLPHINS	0%	0%	0%	.3%	1.1%	2.5%	7.2%	12.1%	18.2%	19.3%	18.3%	12.4%	6.0%	2.1%	.5%	.1%	0%
CLEVELAND BROWNS	0%	0%	0%	.1%	.2%	.9%	3.0%	7.0%	13.6%	18.2%	20.4%	17.2%	10.3%	6.6%	2.0%	.4%	0%
TENNESEE TITANS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	.2%	1.4%	3.5%	8.6%	14.0%	21.8%	20.5%	16.7%	9.1%	3.2%	.8%	0%
OAKLAND RAIDERS	0%	0%	0%	0%	.2%	.5%	1.7%	5.2%	9.8%	17.0%	20.4%	19.9%	14.6%	7.5%	2.3%	.8%	0%
BUFFALO BILLS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	.2%	.7%	2.5%	6.7%	12.2%	18.6%	23.1%	16.7%	12.0%	5.4%	1.5%	.3%
HOUSTON TEXANS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	.1%	.6%	1.8%	3.4%	9.4%	16.4%	21.0%	20.7%	15.9%	7.6%	2.7%	.4%

Greg Cooper/US Presswire

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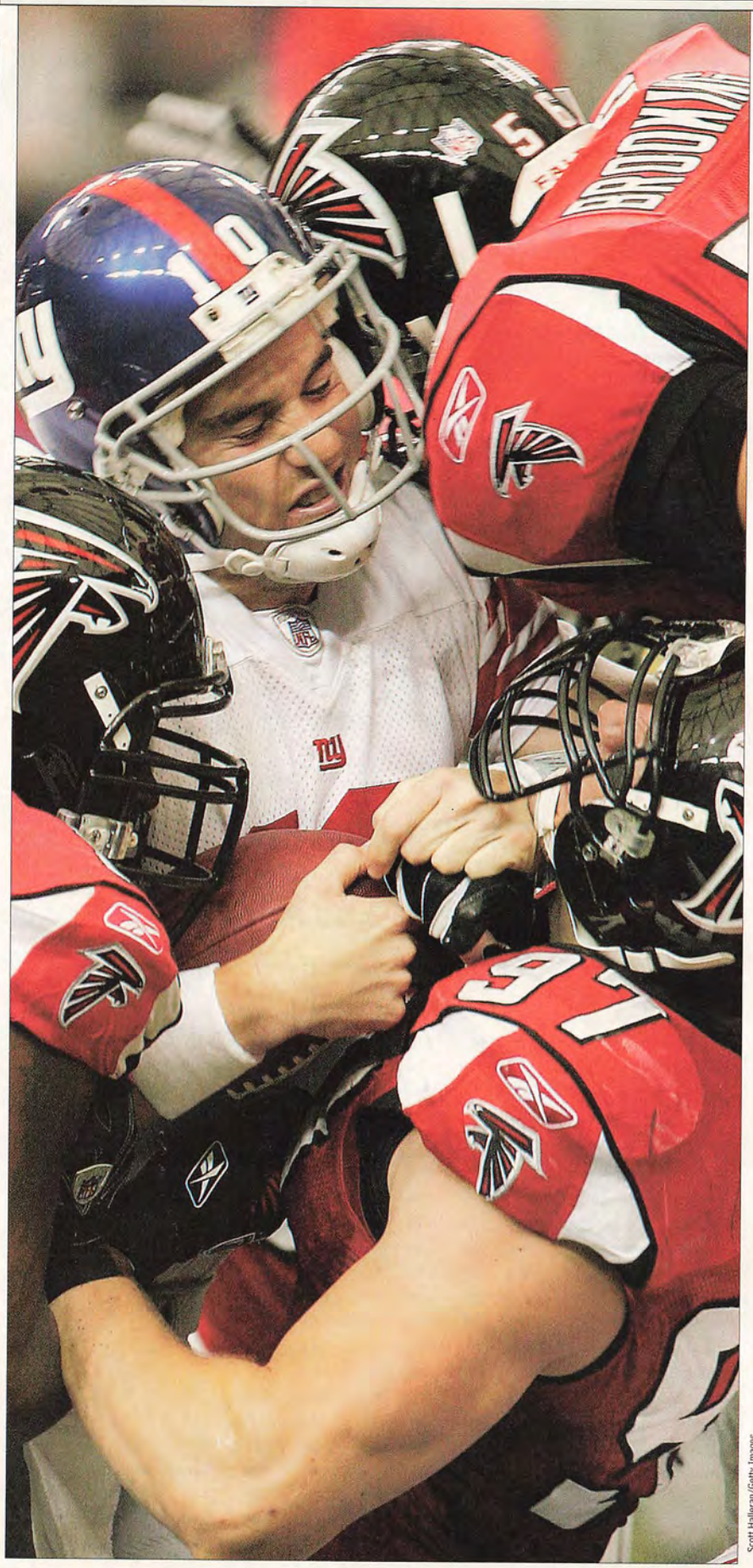

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COWBOYS

Bill Parcells is gone, and so are the egg shells everyone walked around on at Valley Ranch. The expectations, though, haven't changed since Parcells retired and Wade Phillips was hired.

The Cowboys, who haven't won a playoff game since 1996, are optimistic about this season because of how last season ended. Tony Romo's botched hold denied the Cowboys a win in a wild-card playoff game against the Seahawks.

The Cowboys shored up their offensive line in free agency, and they found a veteran free safety. The Cowboys re-signed center Andre Gurode and right tackle Marc Colombo, and they signed ex-Cardinals guard/tackle Leonard Davis to a seven-year, $49.6 million contract. Free safety Ken Hamlin, who had 96 tackles, two sacks and three interceptions last season with Seattle, will be the quarterback of the defense.

Quarterbacks The Cowboys have put their trust in Romo, an undrafted free agent who didn't attempt a pass his first three seasons. Romo threw his first NFL pass in mop-up duty Oct. 15 against Houston, played for the first time when it mattered the following week against the Giants and became the starting quarterback Oct. 29 against Carolina. He took the NFL by storm, going 5–1 in his first six starts. But Romo's Cinderella story didn't have a happy ending. He went 1–4 in his last five starts, including the playoff loss to Seattle, throwing seven touchdowns and six interceptions and losing five fumbles. Romo is the Cowboys' ninth starting quarterback since Troy Aikman retired after the 2000 season. They are convinced that Romo finally ends their search for Aikman's replacement. The Cowboys signed Brad Johnson, a 15-year veteran who has passed for 28,548 yards, to back up Romo.

Running Backs Dallas started Julius Jones, who produced his first 1,000-yard season with 1,084 yards on 267 carries. It broke a four-year drought for the Cowboys, whose last previous 1,000-yard rusher was Emmitt Smith in 2001. But Jones had to share the load with Marion Barber, whose number was called on third down and at the goal line. Barber had 654 rushing yards, 196 receiving yards and 16 total touchdowns on 158 touches. The Cowboys handed the ball off to someone other than Jones or Barber only 23 times, including reverses and end arounds. Dallas plans to make the fullback a bigger part of its offense. Oliver Hoyte, a converted linebacker, Lousaka Polite and sixth-round choice Deon Anderson will compete for the starting job.

Receivers Terrell Owens led the NFL with 13 touchdown receptions, but he also dropped 17 passes. He needed two surgeries to repair a torn tendon in his right finger, which he played with most of last season. Jerry Jones is hoping a healthy and happy T.O. will do even more than he did in 2006 when he caught 85 passes for 1,180 yards. Terry Glenn also posted a 1,000-yard season, his second consecutive and fourth of his career, with 1,047 yards and six touchdowns on 70 catches. It marked only the second time in team history that a pair of receivers both had 1,000-plus yards in the same season. Glenn, though, will be 33 at the start of this season, and Owens will turn 34 in the middle of it. Patrick Crayton is a solid third receiver. Tight end Jason Witten earned his third consecutive Pro Bowl berth with 64 catches for 754 yards, but he had only one touchdown after scoring six in each of the past two seasons. Anthony Fasano joins Witten in two-tight end formations.

Julius Jones

Offensive Linemen Jones calls left tackle Flozell Adams, left guard Kyle Kosier, Gurode, Davis and Colombo the team's best starting offensive line since the 1995 Super Bowl season. Adams and Gurode both return from Pro Bowl appearances. Colombo is a former

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE COWBOYS

Bill Parcells didn't win a playoff game in his four seasons in Dallas, but he did leave the organization better off. The Cowboys are expected to have 20 of the same starters as last season, with upgrades at free safety and right guard with the signings of Ken Hamlin and Leonard Davis, respectively. Wade Phillips, though, will make some changes. The defense still will run the 3-4 scheme, but Phillips and defensive coordinator Brian Stewart will use more zone blitz. The offensive playbook will be bigger, with more plays utilizing a fullback under new coordinator Jason Garrett. Quarterback Tony Romo, who started the first 11 games of his career last season, should be better through experience. Terrell Owens should be better, because he's healthy. His season started with a hamstring injury, and he played through an injured finger on his right hand. Owens' rapport with Garrett and Romo will be a key to how well the offense clicks. Even though the Cowboys haven't won a playoff game since 1996, they were a botched hold on a 19-yard field-goal attempt from going to the NFC Championship Game. The Cowboys are convinced they could have beaten the Bears in Chicago. Having been that close to going to the Super Bowl last season, they feel like they're even closer this season. "We weren't far from the Super Bowl," Cowboys owner Jerry Jones says.

2006 Record: 9–7

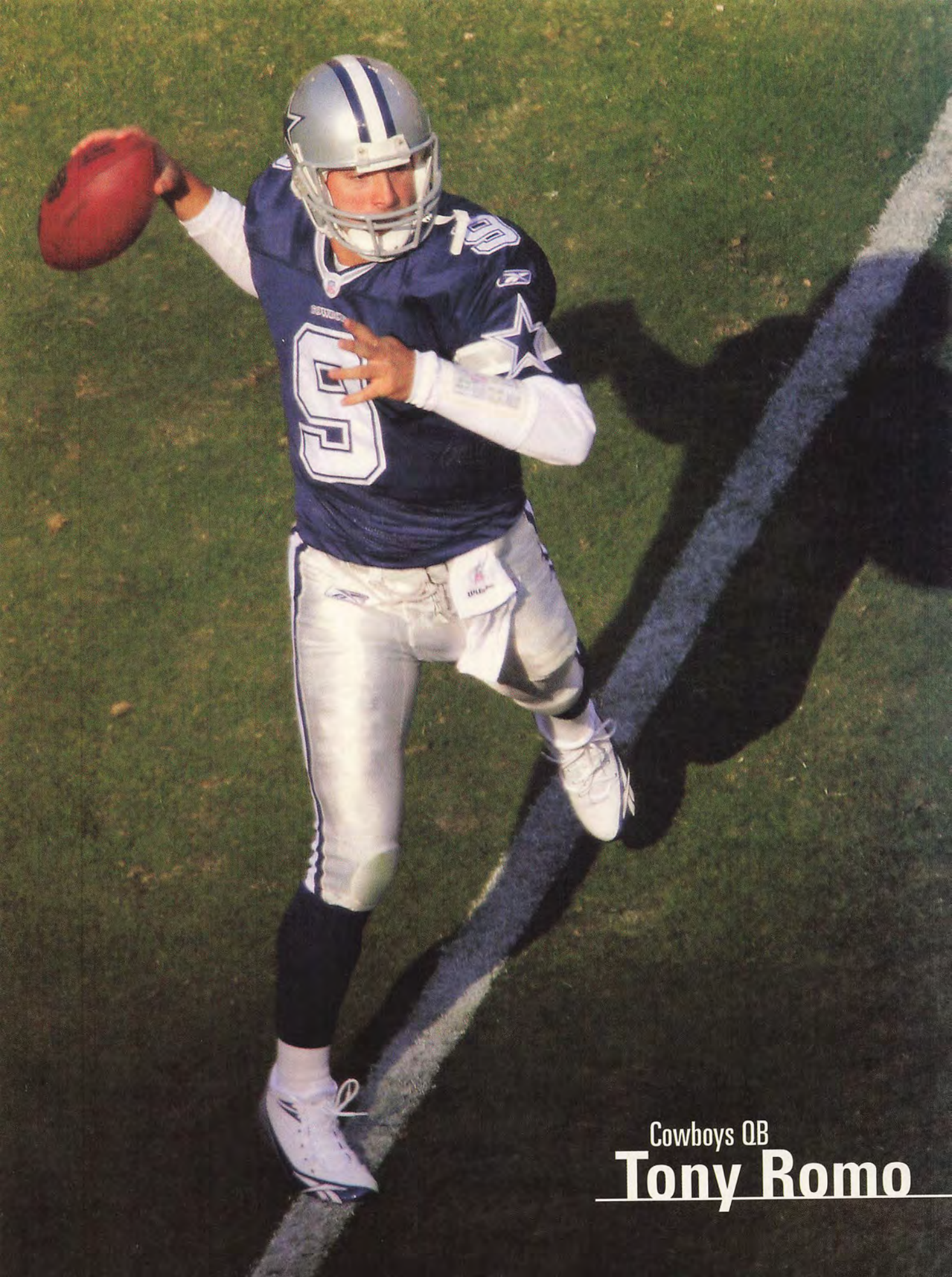
2007 NFC East Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	N.Y. Giants	8:15 pm
Sept.	16	at Miami	4:05 pm
Sept.	23	at Chicago	8:15 pm
Sept.	30	St. Louis	1:00 pm
Oct.	8	at Buffalo	8:30 pm
Oct.	14	New England	4:15 pm
Oct.	21	Minnesota	1:00 pm
Week	8	BYE	
Nov.	4	at Philadelphia	8:15 pm
Nov.	11	at N.Y. Giants	4:15 pm
Nov.	18	Washington	1:00 pm
Nov.	22	N.Y. Jets	4:15 pm
Nov.	29	Green Bay	8:15 pm
Dec.	9	at Detroit	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Philadelphia	4:15 pm
Dec.	22	at Carolina	8:15 pm
Dec.	30	at Washington	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Jones: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports
Romo: David Drapkin/Getty Images



Cowboys QB

Tony Romo

Terrell Owens

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Next coach Even though he's never been a coordinator and has coached in the NFL for only two years, Jason Garrett was hired before Wade Phillips was named head coach. Owner Jerry Jones trusts that despite Garrett's inexperience he can thrive as the offensive coordinator while grooming Tony Romo. Garrett was hired with the expectation that he eventually will replace Phillips.

Thinking defensively With two first-round choices next season, and with Flozell Adams and Julius Jones in the last year of their contracts, and Terrell Owens and Terry Glenn growing old, it might be time to spend a first-round choice on an offensive player — for the first time since 1997.

Brotherly love Julius Jones and his brother, Thomas, both gained more than 1,000 rushing yards last season. It marked the first time in NFL history that brothers each rushed for 1,000 yards in a single season. Julius and Thomas, now with the Jets, will meet on the field on Thanksgiving Day in Dallas.

Double digits DeMarcus Ware had 11.5 sacks last season, the most for a linebacker in team history. It was the first time since 1996 when defensive lineman Tony Tolbert had 12 that the Cowboys had a double-digit sack leader.

first-round draft choice of the Bears who finally overcame his injury history to start all 16 games. Kosier filled some big shoes last season, taking over for Larry Allen, and the Cowboys hardly missed a beat. Davis was an underachiever in Arizona, never living up to being the No. 2 overall choice in 2001 with no Pro Bowl berths in his career. Still, the Cowboys gave him a team-record $16 million signing bonus. Davis spent his first three seasons at guard before moving to left tackle in 2004, but his best position is guard.

Defensive Linemen Phillips expects to get more out of defensive ends Marcus Spears and Chris Canty, who combined for only 59 tackles and two sacks last season. Spears, a first-round draft choice in 2005, has made only 48 tackles and 2.5 sacks in his two seasons. Spears blames his mediocre stats on not being used properly by Parcells, who publicly called out Spears last season. Nose tackle Jason Ferguson was the Cowboys' top lineman in 2006, filling the middle like they thought he would when they signed him to a five-year, $21.5 million deal before the 2005 season. But he turns 33 during the season. Backups Jason Hatcher, a rookie last year, and Jeremiah Ratliff were solid last season and are expected to compete for even more playing time this season.

Linebackers With the defensive-minded Phillips on board, the Cowboys are expecting even bigger numbers from DeMarcus Ware this season. In two seasons, Ware has 104 tackles and 19.5 sacks. The Cowboys missed Greg Ellis down the stretch, when he tore his left Achilles' tendon in the team's ninth game. Dallas' first-round pick, Purdue defensive end/outside linebacker Anthony Spencer, should be Ellis' eventual replacement. Spencer is expected to have an immediate impact as a pass rusher, helping a defense that recorded only 34 sacks last season. Bobby Carpenter's performance in the playoff game against Seattle, when he started at strong-side linebacker and had five tackles and three passes defensed, has the Cowboys optimistic about his future. Carpenter, the 18th overall draft choice last year, had been a disappointment during the regular season. He will be tried inside and outside to find his best position. Inside linebackers Bradie James and Akin Ayodele struggled against the pass, but they ranked first and second on the team in tackles. The Cowboys will have to work on James' confidence, which he lost late last season when teams started isolating him in pass coverage.

Defensive Backs Since Darren Woodson retired after missing the entire 2004 season with a back injury, the Cowboys have sought a replacement for their all-time leading tackler. The lack of a capable free safety has left Roy Williams exposed in coverage for three seasons. That was solved with the signing of Hamlin. Cornerback Terence Newman is one of the league's most underrated players. He had a Pro Bowl-type season a year ago as opponents picked on Anthony Henry and the Cowboys' safeties. Henry played through injuries last season and had an off-year. He turns 31 during the season, and nickel back Aaron Glenn will be 35 when the season starts.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Terrell Owens, WR
Projected to be a top 3 fantasy WR, but that depends on whether Tony Romo continues last season's strong play.
Jason Witten, TE
Only one TD catch in '06 will cause his stock to fall, but at some point he'll be undervalued.

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Specialists The Cowboys feel as good about their specialists as they have in a long time. Punter Mat McBriar earned a Pro Bowl berth with a 48.2-yard average and a 38.6 net with only 10 touchbacks. Kicker Martin Gramatica, signed at midseason to replace Mike Vanderjagt, went 6-of-8 with the Cowboys with his only two misses coming from 44 and 43 yards. They did draft strong-legged Nick Folk of Arizona, and he could end up kicking off. The only big change for Dallas will be Romo relinquishing his role as holder. Johnson likely will take over as Gramatica's holder.

Coaching Staff The Cowboys hired Jason Garrett as their offensive coordinator before they hired Phillips. Garrett, who was Aikman's backup in Dallas from 1993-99, has never called plays. But he will receive help from offensive line coach Tony Sparano, who shared that role last season under Parcells. The offense, which had one of the best years in team history last season, will have a bigger playbook and use the fullback more. Brian Stewart, who was with Phillips in San Diego the past three seasons, was hired as defensive coordinator. But it will be Phillips' defense. The Cowboys are expected to use more zone blitzes than before. Garrett is the team's head coach-in-waiting. But Phillips hopes to make it a long wait.

Owens, Witten: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
16	Baker, Matt	QB	6'2"	212	1	North Carolina	FA-06
14	Johnson, Brad	QB	6'5"	226	15	Florida State	FA-Min-07
9	Romo, Tony	QB	6'2"	225	4	Eastern Illinois	FA-03
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
24	Barber, Marion	RB	6'0"	220	2	Minnesota	D4a-05
46	Hoyte, Oliver	FB	6'3"	250	1	NC State	FA-06
21	Jones, Julius	RB	5'10"	211	3	Notre Dame	D2a-04
39	Polite, Lousaka	FB	6'0"	248	2	Pittsburgh	FA-04
28	Thompson, Tyson	RB	6'1"	220	2	San Jose State	FA-05
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
80	Austin, Miles	WR	6'3"	215	1	Monmouth	FA-06
84	Crayton, Patrick	WR	6'0"	205	3	NW Okla. State	D7b-04
88	Fasano, Anthony	TE	6'4"	258	1	Notre Dame	D2-06
83	Glenn, Terry	WR	5'11"	195	11	Ohio State	T-GB-03
17	Hurd, Sam	WR	6'2"	195	1	Northern Illinois	FA-06
81	Owens, Terrell	WR	6'3"	224	11	Chattanooga	FA-Phi-06
85	Rector, Jamaica	WR	5'10"	186	1	NW Missouri State	FA-06
87	Thorn, Andy	TE	6'5"	250	1	Northern Iowa	FA-06
15	Urban, Jerheme	WR	6'3"	212	3	Trinity (TX)	FA-06
82	Witten, Jason	TE	6'5"	265	4	Tennessee	D3-03
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
76	Adams, Flozell	T	6'7"	340	9	Michigan State	D2-98
67	Berger, Joe	G	6'5"	315	2	Michigan Tech	W-Mia-06
75	Colombo, Marc	T	6'8"	320	5	Boston College	FA-05
70	Davis, Leonard	T	6'6"	365	6	Texas	FA-Ari-07
65	Gurode, Andre	C/G	6'4"	312	5	Colorado	D2a-02
63	Kosier, Kyle	G	6'5"	305	5	Arizona State	FA-Det-06
77	McQuistan, Pat	T	6'6"	315	1	Weber State	D7-06
71	Procter, Cory	G	6'4"	305	2	Montana	FA-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
72	Bowen, Stephen	DE	6'5"	300	1	Hofstra	FA-06
99	Canty, Chris	DE	6'7"	300	2	Virginia	D4b-05
95	Ferguson, Jason	DT	6'3"	310	10	Georgia	FA-NYJ-05
97	Hatcher, Jason	DE	6'6"	295	1	Grambling	D3-06
90	Ratliff, Jay	DE	6'4"	305	2	Auburn	D7-05
96	Spears, Marcus	DE	6'4"	298	2	LSU	D1b-05
60	Stanley, Montavious	DT	6'2"	313	1	Louisville	FA-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Ayodele, Akin	LB	6'2"	250	5	Purdue	FA-Jac-06
57	Burnett, Kevin	LB	6'3"	240	2	Tennessee	D2-05
54	Carpenter, Bobby	LB	6'2"	257	1	Ohio State	D1-06
98	Ellis, Greg	LB	6'6"	270	9	North Carolina	D1-98
53	Glymph, Junior	LB	6'6"	272	3	Carson-Newman	FA-06
56	James, Bradie	LB	6'2"	250	4	LSU	D4-03
94	Ware, DeMarcus	LB	6'4"	257	2	Troy	D1a-05
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
20	Bilbo, Damarius	S	6'2"	220	1	Georgia Tech	FA-06
36	Butler, Quincy	CB	6'1"	190	1	TCU	FA-06
29	Davis, Keith	S	5'11"	205	4	Sam Houston	FA-04
37	Elam, Abram	S	6'0"	210	1	Kent State	FA-06
26	Glenn, Aaron	CB	5'9"	185	13	Texas A&M	FA-05
27	Hamlin, Ken	S	6'2"	209	4	Arkansas	FA-Sea-07
42	Henry, Anthony	CB	6'1"	208	6	South Florida	FA-Cle-05
33	Jones, Nathan	CB	5'10"	192	3	Rutgers	D7a-04
41	Newman, Terence	CB	5'11"	195	4	Kansas State	D1-03
35	Reeves, Jacques	CB	6'0"	192	3	Purdue	D7c-04
25	Watkins, Patrick	S	6'5"	211	1	Florida State	D5-06
31	Williams, Roy	S	6'0"	229	5	Oklahoma	D1-02
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
7	Gramatica, Martin	K	5'8"	175	7	Kansas State	FA-06
91	Ladouceur, Louis-Philippe	LS	6'4"	255	2	California	FA-05
3	Martinez, Carlos	K	5'8"	180	1	Buena Vista (IA)	FA-06
1	McBriar, Mat	P	6'1"	223	3	Hawaii	FA-04

Head Coach: Wade Phillips (48-39, 0-3 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Jason Garrett
Defensive Coordinator: Brian Stewart

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	83	Terry Glenn
WR	81	Terrell Owens
LT	76	Flozell Adams
LG	63	Kyle Kosier
C	65	Andre Gurode
RG	**70**	**Leonard Davis**
RT	75	Marc Colombo
TE	82	Jason Witten
QB	9	Tony Romo
FB	39	Lousaka Polite
RB	21	Julius Jones

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	99	Chris Canty
NT	95	Jason Ferguson
DE	96	Marcus Spears
OLB	94	DeMarcus Ware
ILB	50	Akin Ayodele
ILB	56	Bradie James
OLB	98	Greg Ellis
CB	41	Terence Newman
CB	42	Anthony Henry
SS	31	Roy Williams
FS	**27**	**Ken Hamlin**

SPECIALISTS

K	7	Martin Gramatica
P	1	Mat McBriar

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**14**	**Brad Johnson**
RB	24	Marion Barber
WR	84	Patrick Crayton
TE	88	Anthony Fasano
LB	54	Bobby Carpenter
CB	26	Aaron Glenn

New acquisitions in **bold**

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OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

RG	Leonard Davis (Ari)
S	Ken Hamlin (Sea)
QB	Brad Johnson (Min)

Key Losses

QB	Drew Bledsoe (Retired)
DE	Kenyon Coleman (NYJ)
LB	Ryan Fowler (Ten)
C	Al Johnson (Ari)
RG	Marco Rivera (Retired)
LB	Al Singleton (FA)

2007 Draft

1.	Anthony Spencer	DE	6'3"	266	Purdue
3.	James Marten	T	6'7"	303	Boston College
4.	Isaiah Stanback	QB	6'2"	216	Washington
4.	Doug Free	T	6'7"	318	Northern Illinois
6.	Nick Folk	K	6'1"	215	Arizona
6.	Deon Anderson	FB	5'10"	236	Connecticut
7.	Courtney Brown	CB	6'1"	205	Cal Poly
7.	Alan Ball	CB	6'1"	183	Illinois

Hamlin settles the Cowboys' free safety position for at least a season. It has been a revolving door since Darren Woodson missed the entire 2004 season with a back injury that forced his retirement. Davis fills a need at right guard as a back injury felled Marco Rivera, a prized free-agent signee only two years ago. Johnson replaces Drew Bledsoe — who retired after his release from the Cowboys — as the team's backup quarterback. Johnson also will take over the all-important role of holder for Martin Gramatica. Only two draft picks are expected to have a chance to have an immediate impact. Spencer will be used as a pass rusher and groomed as the eventual replacement for Greg Ellis at outside linebacker. Sixth-round pick Anderson will compete for the starting fullback job since the Cowboys are committed to running more two-back formations in their offense.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Tony Romo	337	220	2,903	19	13
Drew Bledsoe*	169	90	1,164	7	8
Rushing	**Att.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Julius Jones	267		1,084	4.1	4
Marion Barber	135		654	4.8	14
Receiving	**Rec.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Terrell Owens	85		1,180	13.9	13
Terry Glenn	70		1,047	15.0	6
Jason Witten	64		754	11.8	1

Kicking: Martin Gramatica, 6-8 FGs, 23-23 XPs, 44 points
Tackles: Bradie James, 101; Akin Ayodele, 84
Sacks: DeMarcus Ware, 11.5
Interceptions: Roy Williams, 5
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (9–7)

Sept.	10	at Jacksonville	L	17–24
Sept.	17	Washington	W	27–10
Oct.	1	at Tennessee	W	45–14
Oct.	8	at Philadelphia	L	24–38
Oct.	15	Houston	W	34– 6
Oct.	23	N.Y. Giants	L	22–36
Oct.	29	at Carolina	W	35–14
Nov.	5	at Washington	L	19–22
Nov.	12	at Arizona	W	27–10
Nov.	19	Indianapolis	W	21–14
Nov.	23	Tampa Bay	W	38–10
Dec.	3	at N.Y. Giants	W	23–20
Dec.	10	New Orleans	L	17–42
Dec.	16	at Atlanta	W	38–28
Dec.	25	Philadelphia	L	7–23
Dec.	31	Detroit	L	31–39
		Postseason		
Jan.	6	at Seattle	L	20–21

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	360.8	5	+38.7
Rushing	121.0	13	+3.7
Passing	239.8	5	+35.0
Scoring	26.6	4	+5.9
Punt Returns	8.4	21	-0.3
Kick Returns	23.3	8	+0.8
Red Zone TD %	60.3	4	+9.5
Defense			
Total Defense	322.8	13	+0.7
Against Rush	103.7	10	-13.6
Against Pass	219.1	24	+14.3
Points Allowed	21.9	20	+1.2
Interceptions	18	10T	+1.7
Sacks	34	19T	-2.3
Turnover Diff.	+1	15T	-

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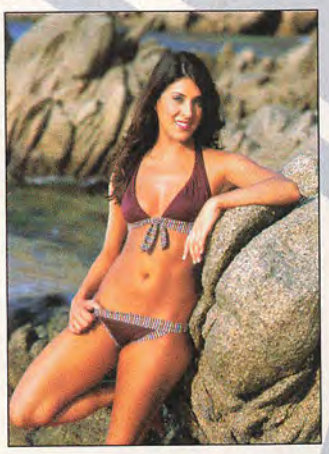

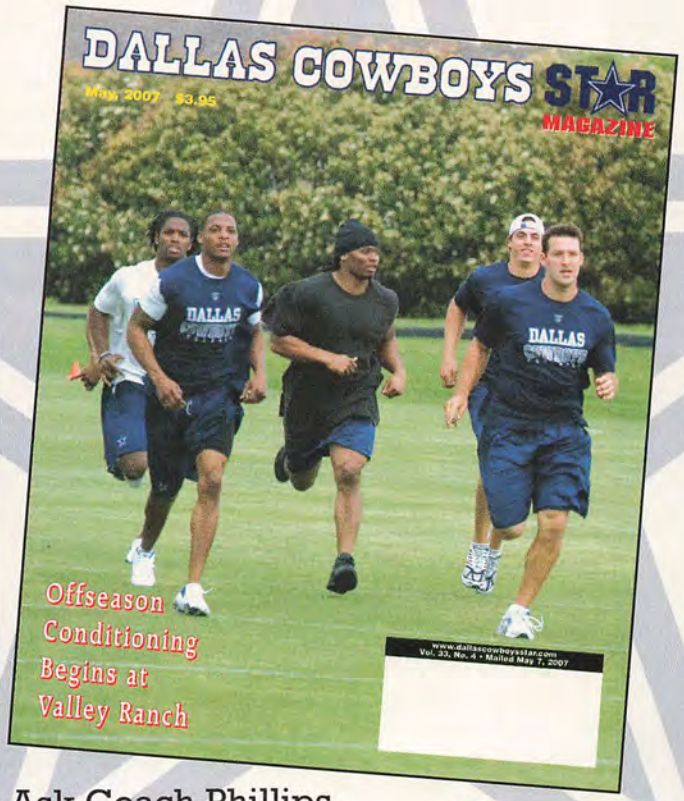

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GIANTS

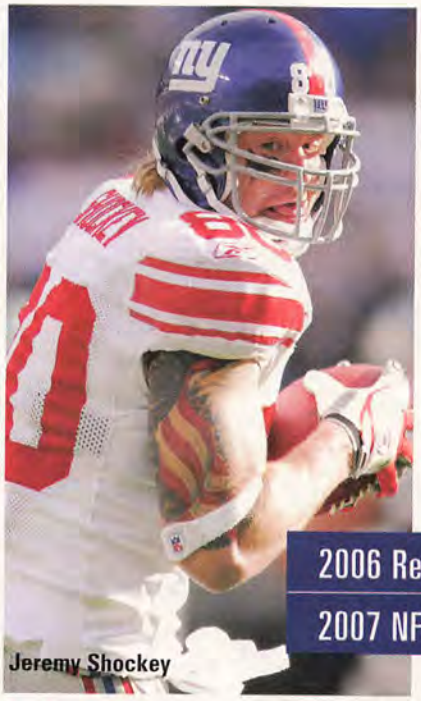
When the television coverage begins of the Giants' opening-night game in Dallas, the cameras will surely zoom in on the best player their franchise has had for much of the past decade.

It's just too bad Tiki Barber will be in the NBC studios, and not down on the field.

His retirement, and what the Giants do to replace him, are the keys to almost everything that will happen this season. Can Tom Coughlin, who must once again win this year to save his job, succeed without his best player? Can Eli Manning finally develop into a star quarterback, without his running back crutch to lean on? Can Brandon Jacobs replace not only all of Barber's yardage, but also his unbelievable clutch performances? And if the Giants only went 8–8 last season with Barber, how exactly are they supposed to be better without him? Barber will surely have a few answers to those questions on the NBC pre-game show on Sunday night, Sept. 9. It remains to be seen if the Giants have any good answers, too.

Quarterbacks Manning has been good and bad and brilliant and awful during his up-and-down three-year career. Every time it looks like he's finally about to emerge as a player worthy of all the Giants traded for him on Draft Day, 2004, he falls back into bad old habits and starts throwing balls at his receivers' feet. The truth is, he's had too many good games and brilliant moments to be considered a bust, but entering Year 4 he still hasn't emerged as a star. He's too inaccurate at times (a career best 57.7 completion percentage last year) and far too inconsistent. The Giants, though, are committed to him. So if he can ignore the critics and the impatient fan base, he has time to work out his issues. He does have a veteran backup in newly signed Anthony Wright, but Wright's job is to be the voice of experience and help Manning develop. It should help Manning that his new offensive coordinator, Kevin Gilbride, is his old quarterbacks coach. Gilbride knows Mannings' likes, dislikes and strengths.

Running Backs Jacobs is a strong power runner who can bowl over linebackers (and, in some cases, defensive linemen), but he also has surprising speed for a big man and the ability to turn the corner quickly and out-race corners, too. His receiving ability isn't what Barber's was, but he does have decent hands. The biggest questions about Jacobs are: Can he perform in the clutch like Barber did? And can he stay healthy? The Giants are unsure about the answer to the latter. Jacobs is a player who loves contact, but contact can lead to injuries. He's promised to work at avoiding contact as much as possible, but old habits die hard. That's why the Giants traded for Reuben Droughns, who is smaller than Jacobs, but the same type of straight-ahead power runner. He also has a track record — two 1,200-yard-plus seasons — that proves he can step in and serve as the primary ball-carrier.



Jeremy Shockey

Receivers A lot of bodies, a lot of questions. Plaxico Burress is as dangerous a weapon as any receiver in the league as long as he can stay interested and happy, which is never a certainty. Amani Toomer is the franchise leader in most receiving categories, but he's going to be 33 years old and is coming off a torn ACL. Sinorice Moss was a rookie with big potential last season who could hardly get on the field due to a slow-healing strained quad. What will the corps look like this year? All indications are that Toomer will be fine by opening night. However, the Giants drafted receiver Steve Smith in the second round for insurance. Smith is a possession receiver, just like Toomer, so he could easily step into his role. Throw in Jeremy Shockey, who is still one of the league's best tight ends when he's 100 percent, and this is a terrific unit if everyone is healthy.

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE GIANTS

Tom Coughlin was very nearly fired at the end of last season, and probably would have been if not for a Herculean effort by Tiki Barber in the Giants' season finale that lifted the team to 8–8 and into the playoffs. The good news for Coughlin is that win earned him a one-year extension. The bad news is that he needs to win this year without Barber, who turned in his cleats for a seat on NBC's Today Show. How are the Giants supposed to improve without one of the best players they've had in the last 10 years? It won't be easy, but the two biggest keys are quarterback Eli Manning and running back Brandon Jacobs. Manning has been up and down in his career, showing flashes of greatness and flashes of mediocrity. This has to be the year when he finally justifies the king's ransom ex-GM Ernie Accorsi sent to San Diego for his rights on Draft Day, 2004. And Jacobs needs to fill Barber's huge shoes, and not just by rushing for 1,500-plus yards. The beauty of Barber was in how he ripped off his biggest runs and compiled his biggest games at exactly the right moment for the Giants over the last three years. He would win games by himself, at times. Jacobs, with very little experience, needs to prove he's just as clutch.

2006 Record: 8–8

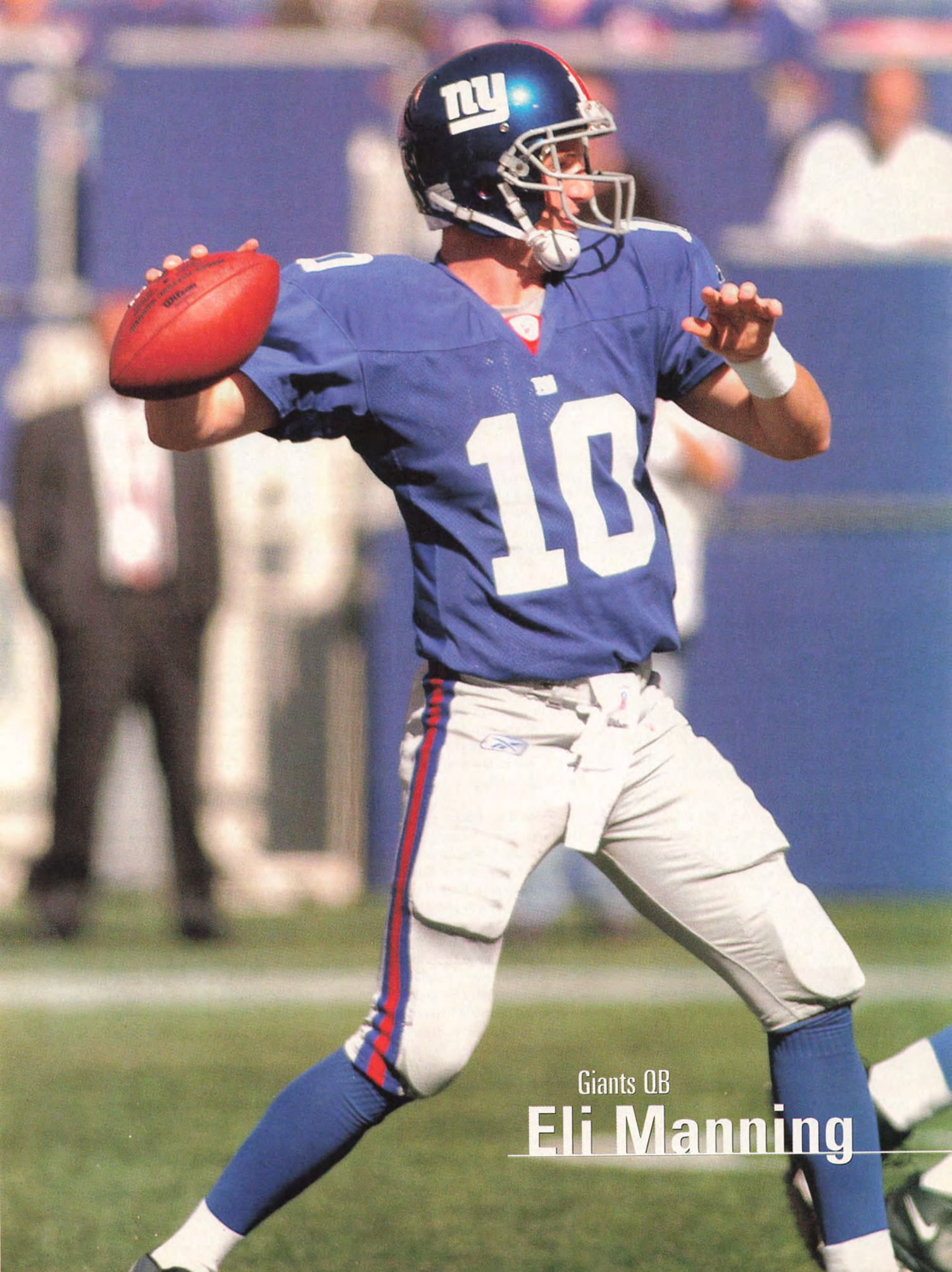
2007 NFC East Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Dallas	8:15 pm
Sept.	16	Green Bay	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Washington	4:15 pm
Sept.	30	Philadelphia	8:15 pm
Oct.	7	N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Oct.	15	at Atlanta	8:30 pm
Oct.	21	San Francisco	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	#Miami	1:00 pm
Week	9	BYE	
Nov.	11	Dallas	4:15 pm
Nov.	18	at Detroit	4:15 pm
Nov.	25	Minnesota	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Chicago	4:15 pm
Dec.	9	at Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Washington	8:15 pm
Dec.	23	at Buffalo	1:00 pm
Dec.	29	New England	8:15pm

All Times Eastern; #London, England (subject to change)

Shockey: Grant Halverson/US Presswire; Manning: Steve Moore



Giants QB

Eli Manning

Antonio Pierce

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Good company Tom Coughlin may still be on the hot seat, but it's hard to argue with his success. He's led the Giants to back-to-back playoff appearances, something they hadn't done in 16 seasons. The last coach to lead the Giants to the playoffs in two straight years? Giants legend Bill Parcells (1989-90).

Take that, brother There is no comparison at all — at least not yet — between Giants QB Eli Manning and his much-celebrated brother, Peyton. However, for all the questions about Eli's accuracy, he has thrown only 44 INTs in the first three years of his NFL career. Peyton, in his first three seasons, threw 58.

A true Giant Running back Brandon Jacobs is listed at 6'4", 264 pounds. He is taller and heavier than every member of the Giants' defense except the two defensive tackles, defensive end Michael Strahan (who is an inch taller, but nine pounds lighter) and linebacker Mathias Kiwanuka (6'5", 265), who was just converted from defensive end.

Wanted: Interceptions How desperate are the Giants for a playmaker in the secondary? No defensive back had more than two interceptions last year, and they haven't had a cornerback pick off more than two passes in the same season since 2001.

Offensive Linemen Over the last couple of years, the Giants' line grew together from a seeming mess into one of the most solid units in the NFL. So what do they do? They cut left tackle Luke Petitgout. Now what? The answer to that question may not be known until opening day, but unless the Giants add a veteran, the answer will involve some upheaval. Unwilling to move right tackle Kareem McKenzie, the Giants are considering moving David Diehl from left guard to left tackle since he has played tackle before. That would open a hole for former starter Rich Seubert to reclaim his old left guard spot. Another option is Guy Whimper, a fourth-round pick from 2006, who was considered a project last year. Whatever they do, the left side is in flux, so it's a good thing they still have future Pro Bowler Chris Snee at right guard and they re-signed solid center Shaun O'Hara.

Defensive Linemen There are two Pro Bowl-caliber ends on the Giants' roster in Michael Strahan and Osi Umenyiora, but both carry their own baggage into this season. Umenyiora's 2006 season was ruined by a torn hip flexor that kept him on the sidelines for a while and limited his effectiveness when he returned. Strahan will be 36 in November and is coming off a dangerous Lisfranc foot sprain — an injury that some doctors say takes at least a year to fully recover from. At Strahan's age there's no guarantee he'll be full strength. What to do if they're not? Well, they do have promising Justin Tuck in reserve, but he too is coming off a Lisfranc sprain that was so bad it required surgery. And they no longer have Mathias Kiwanuka, who's been converted to strong-side linebacker.

Linebackers The Giants planned to move Kiwanuka even before they cut LaVar Arrington and Carlos Emmons. That's why they weren't aggressive at all in pursuing free agent replacements. Kiwanuka definitely has the size and speed to play the position, and he showed the coverage ability last season when asked to drop back. With Kiwanuka on the strong side and Pro Bowler Antonio Pierce still manning the middle, two-thirds of this unit is good. The weak side, though, is a weakness. Gerris Wilkinson had a chance to claim this job from Brandon Short last year but couldn't do it because he lacked strength and wasn't great in coverage. If he doesn't win it again, the job will go to Kawika Mitchell, who is a solid veteran linebacker, but is being converted from the middle.

Defensive Backs Was it the system or the players? That's the big question in the Giants' secondary. Ask the aging Sam Madison or the struggling Corey Webster and they'll tell you the old defensive system wasn't suited for their talents. Now they'll be playing a press-coverage system more tailored to their strengths. If they're wrong, No. 1 draft pick Aaron Ross should be breathing down their necks by October. Somehow, some way the Giants need a playmaker to finally emerge. Will it come from the safety positions? There are questions there, too. Gibril Wilson showed so much promise as a rookie, but he's lost his impact and aggressiveness the last two seasons. And all the talent Will Demps flashed in Baltimore was missing until late last season as he slowly worked his way back from an injured knee.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Jeremy Shockey, TE
His value will track right along with Eli Manning's, which should be up this year with new offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride.

Brandon Jacobs, RB
With Tiki retired, Jacobs will do more this year than just be the designated scorer.

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Specialists The ageless Jeff Feagles is still the best directional punter in the business and Ryan Kuehl is as steady a long-snapper as there is. Beyond that, this unit is a complete unknown. If he's healthy, Moss figures to emerge as the kickoff returner, and the hope is that Ross will return punts. The biggest question, though, is at kicker. The Giants severed ties with Jay Feely and left themselves with two unknown rookies — Josh Huston and Mark Hickok. Given the importance of this position, and the Giants' somewhat recent history of kicking game troubles, it's likely GM Jerry Reese has the numbers of several veteran kickers sitting next to his phone.

Coaching Staff Coughlin tossed his two coordinators on his sword last year and surrounded himself with a new staff for what might be his final season in New York. Steve Spagnuolo, who replaces Tim Lewis as defensive coordinator, was plucked away from the Philadelphia Eagles, so after years of learning under blitz-master Jim Johnson, Spagnuolo should deliver the aggressive, attacking defensive style that Lewis never could. He'll also stick with the 4-3 that suits the Giants' personnel. A big loss, though, will be the retirement of special teams coordinator Mike Sweatman.

Pierce, Jacobs: Steve Moore

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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
8	Hasselbeck, Tim	QB	6'1"	214	5	Boston College	W-Was-05
13	Lorenzen, Jared	QB	6'4"	285	2	Kentucky	FA-04
10	Manning, Eli	QB	6'4"	225	3	Ole Miss	T-SD-04
2	Wright, Anthony	QB	6'1"	211	8	South Carolina	FA-Cin-07
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
22	Droughns, Reuben	RB	5'11"	220	7	Oregon	T-Cle-07
20	Finn, Jim	FB	6'0"	245	7	Pennsylvania	FA-Ind-03
27	Jacobs, Brandon	RB	6'4"	264	2	Southern Illinois	D4-05
30	Sims, James	RB	6'1"	211	1	Washington	FA-06
34	Ward, Derrick	RB	5'11"	228	3	Ottawa	FA-04
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
17	Burress, Plaxico	WR	6'5"	232	7	Michigan State	FA-Pit-05
15	Jennings, Michael	WR	5'11"	181	1	Florida State	FA-04
84	Johnson, Darcy	TE	6'5"	252	1	UCF	FA-06
89	Mix, Anthony	WR	6'5"	235	1	Auburn	FA-06
83	Moss, Sinorice	WR	5'8"	185	1	Miami	D2-06
80	Shockey, Jeremy	TE	6'5"	251	5	Miami	D1-02
81	Toomer, Amani	WR	6'3"	203	11	Michigan	D2-96
85	Tyree, David	WR	6'0"	206	4	Syracuse	D6c-03
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
66	Diehl, David	G/T	6'5"	319	4	Illinois	D5-03
71	Dunn, Jonathan	T	6'7"	324	2	Virginia Tech	FA-06
64	Lentz, Matthew	G	6'6"	320	1	Michigan	FA-06
62	Londot, Todd	OL	6'5"	301	1	Miami (Ohio)	FA-06
67	McKenzie, Kareem	T	6'6"	327	6	Penn State	FA-NYJ-05
60	O'Hara, Shaun	C	6'3"	303	7	Rutgers	FA-Cle-04
65	Ruegamer, Grey	G	6'4"	299	8	Arizona State	FA-06
69	Seubert, Rich	G	6'3"	310	6	Western Illinois	FA-01
76	Snee, Chris	G	6'3"	317	3	Boston College	D2-04
68	Tarullo, Matt	OL	6'5"	312	2	Syracuse	FA-06
79	Whimper, Guy	T	6'5"	302	1	East Carolina	D4b-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
93	Adams, Titus	DT	6'4"	305	1	Nebraska	FA-06
95	Awasom, Adrian	DE	6'5"	280	2	North Texas	FA-06
96	Cofield, Barry	DT	6'4"	306	1	Northwestern	D4a-06
74	Davis, Tommy	DE	6'2"	257	1	North Carolina	FA-06
78	Ioane, Junior	DT	6'4"	318	7	Arizona State	FA-06
94	Joseph, William	DT	6'5"	308	4	Miami	D1-03
98	Robbins, Fred	DT	6'4"	317	7	Wake Forest	FA-Min-04
75	Seawright, Jonas	DT	6'6"	335	1	North Carolina	FA-05
92	Strahan, Michael	DE	6'5"	275	14	Texas Southern	D2-93
91	Tuck, Justin	DE	6'5"	274	2	Notre Dame	D3-05
72	Umenyiora, Osi	DE	6'3"	261	4	Troy	D2-03
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
57	Blackburn, Chase	LB	6'3"	247	2	Akron	FA-05
97	Kiwanuka, Mathias	LB	6'5"	265	1	Boston College	D1-06
50	Mitchell, Kawika	LB	6'1"	253	4	South Florida	FA-KC-07
58	Pierce, Antonio	LB	6'1"	238	6	Arizona	FA-Was-05
48	Smith, Tyson	LB	6'2"	240	1	Iowa State	FA-06
53	Torbor, Reggie	LB	6'2"	250	3	Auburn	D4-04
59	Wilkinson, Gerris	LB	6'3"	231	1	Georgia Tech	D3-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
33	Bell, Jason	S	6'0"	196	6	UCLA	FA-Hou-06
37	Butler, James	S	6'3"	215	2	Georgia Tech	FA-05
36	Cobbs, R.J.	CB	5'11"	190	1	Massachsetts	FA-06
47	Demps, Will	S	6'0"	208	5	San Diego State	FA-Bal-06
35	Dockery, Kevin	CB	5'8"	188	1	Mississippi State	FA-06
22	Madison, Sam	CB	5'11"	180	10	Louisville	FA-06
38	McPhearson, Gerrick	CB	5'10"	197	1	Maryland	D7-06
25	McQuarters, R.W.	CB	5'10"	194	9	Oklahoma State	FA-Det-06
26	Osei, Claudius	S	6'0"	207	1	Florida State	FA-06
	Underwood, E.J.	CB	6'1"	185	1	Pikeville	FA-06
23	Webster, Corey	CB	6'0"	202	2	LSU	D2-05
28	Wilson, Gibril	S	6'0"	209	3	Tennessee	D5-04
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
18	Feagles, Jeff	P	6'1"	215	19	Miami	FA-Sea-03
5	Huston, Josh	K	6'1"	200	1	Ohio State	FA-07
90	Kuehl, Ryan	LS	6'5"	276	10	Virginia	FA-Cle-03

Head Coach: Tom Coughlin (93-83, 4-6 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Kevin Gilbride
Defensive Coordinator: Steve Spagnuolo

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	17	Plaxico Burress
WR	81	Amani Toomer
LT	66	David Diehl
LG	69	Rich Seubert
C	60	Shaun O'Hara
RG	76	Chris Snee
RT	67	Kareem McKenzie
TE	80	Jeremy Shockey
QB	10	Eli Manning
FB	20	Jim Finn
RB	27	Brandon Jacobs

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	92	Michael Strahan
DT	98	Fred Robbins
DT	96	Barry Cofield
DE	72	Osi Umenyiora
SLB	97	Mathias Kiwanuka
MLB	58	Antonio Pierce
WLB	59	Gerris Wilkinson
CB	23	Corey Webster
CB	29	Sam Madison
S	47	Will Demps
S	28	Gibril Wilson

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	5	Josh Huston
P	18	Jeff Feagles

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**2**	**Anthony Wright**
RB	**22**	**Reuben Droughns**
WR	83	Sinorice Moss
DE	91	Justin Tuck
CB	**31**	**Aaron Ross**

New acquisitions in **bold**

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OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

RB	Reuben Droughns	(Cle)
LB	Kawika Mitchell	(KC)
QB	Anthony Wright	(Cin)

Key losses

LB	LaVar Arrington	(FA)
RB	Tiki Barber	(Retired)
WR	Tim Carter	(Cle)
LB	Carlos Emmons	(FA)
K	Jay Feely	(Mia)
LT	Luke Petitgout	(TB)
LB	Brandon Short	(FA)

2007 Draft

1.	Aaron Ross	CB	6'1"	192	Texas
2.	Steve Smith	WR	5'11"	199	USC
3.	Jay Alford	DT	6'3"	304	Penn State
4.	Zak DeOssie	OLB	6'5"	250	Brown
5.	Kevin Boss	TE	6'6"	257	Western Oregon
6.	Adam Koets	T	6'5"	298	Oregon State
7.	Michael Johnson	SS	6'3"	211	Arizona
7.	Ahmad Bradshaw	RB	5'9"	198	Marshall

It was a very, very quiet offseason for the Giants, who essentially sat out the entire free agent market. Their biggest move was a minor trade, sending Carter, an oft-injured receiver, to Cleveland for Droughns , a former 1,000-yard tailback. The Giants wanted someone to take 10-15 carries per game from Brandon Jacobs, to keep him healthy. Ideally, they would have preferred someone more like Barber, with a shiftier running style. Droughns, like Jacobs, is a power rusher who feasts on yardage right in front of him. The other big impact player figures to be Ross, a cornerback taken with the 20th pick in the draft. The Giants are desperate for a playmaker in the secondary and he could be it. He could impact the punt return game, too. As for their losses, enough can't be said about the irreplaceable Barber. But just as big might be the jettisoning of left tackle Petitgout. Finding his replacement might be a season-long affair.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Eli Manning	522	301	3,244	24	18
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Tiki Barber*	327	1,662	5.1	5	
Brandon Jacobs	96	423	4.4	9	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Plaxico Burress	63	988	15.7	10	
Jeremy Shockey	66	623	9.4	7	
Tiki Barber*	58	465	8.0	0	

Kicking: Jay Feely,* 23-27 FGs, 38-38 XPs, 107 points
Tackles: Antonio Pierce, 137; Will Demps, Gibril Wilson, 100
Sacks: Osi Umenyiora, 6
Interceptions: Seven players tied with 2
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	10	Indianapolis	L	21–26
Sept.	17	at Philadelphia (OT)	W	30–24
Sept.	24	at Seattle	L	30–42
Oct.	8	Washington	W	19– 3
Oct.	15	at Atlanta	W	27–14
Oct.	23	at Dallas	W	36–22
Oct.	29	Tampa Bay	W	17– 3
Nov.	5	Houston	W	14–10
Nov.	12	Chicago	L	20–38
Nov.	20	at Jacksonville	L	10–26
Nov.	26	at Tennessee	L	21–24
Dec.	3	Dallas	L	20–23
Dec.	10	at Carolina	W	27–13
Dec.	17	Philadelphia	L	22–36
Dec.	24	New Orleans	L	7–30
Dec.	30	at Washington	W	34–28
		Postseason		
Jan.	7	at Philadelphia	L	20–23

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	325.9	14	+3.8
Rushing	134.8	7	+17.5
Passing	191.1	19	-13.7
Scoring	22.2	11	+1.5
Punt Returns	8.7	15	-
Kick Returns	20.1	30	-2.4
Red Zone TD %	52.9	13	+2.1
Defense			
Total Defense	342.4	25	+20.3
Against Rush	114.4	14	-2.9
Against Pass	228.1	28	+23.3
Points Allowed	22.6	24	+1.9
Interceptions	17	13T	+0.7
Sacks	32	23T	-4.3
Turnover Diff.	0	17T	-

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EAGLES

PHILADELPHIA

The idea that the Eagles would go only as far as Donovan McNabb could take them was shattered last season. That leaves the team searching for a new identity in 2007, even if, as expected, McNabb is back at quarterback.

Will the lessons of 2006 help the team take a step forward, with Brian Westbrook playing a larger role in the offense? Or will the Eagles revert to the passing mania that led to big numbers — and injury-shortened seasons — for McNabb and added pressure on the Eagles defense?

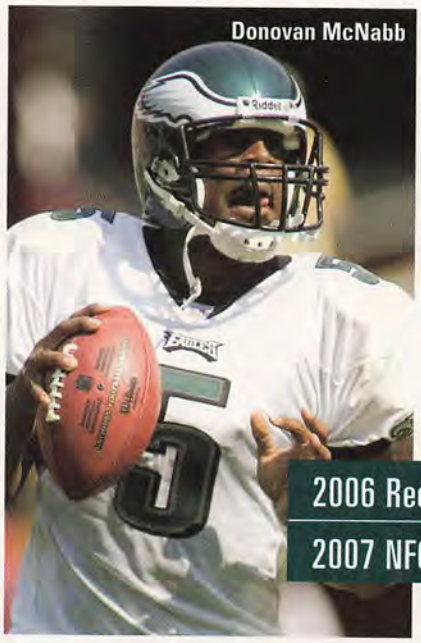
When McNabb went down with a torn right ACL last November, Jeff Garcia stepped in and, after losing his first start, led the team to five consecutive wins and the NFC East title. But the key to the late-season surge was coach Andy Reid's decision to turn play calling duties over to offensive coordinator Marty Mornhinweg, who balanced the offense with more running plays.

During the offseason, Reid said he planned to leave the play calling in Mornhinweg's hands. If so, and if McNabb is able to benefit from that more balanced approach, the Eagles offense should be playoff-worthy again.

The defense, which ranked 15th in the NFL last year and struggled badly against the run, features most of the same faces. The Eagles are counting on a crop of 2006 draft picks — defensive tackle Brodrick Bunkley as well as linebackers Chris Gocong and Omar Gaither — to make second-year improvements and upgrade the defense.

Quarterbacks McNabb was lost to injury midway through each of the last two seasons. In 2005, with only Mike McMahon on hand to fill in, the team collapsed. That's why it signed Garcia last year and then brought former backup A.J. Feeley back into the fold. This time, when McNabb went down, the team was able to rally, winning its division and a first-round playoff game. Lesson learned. After signing Feeley to a new contract, the Eagles acquired Kelly Holcomb in the trade that also brought linebacker Takeo Spikes to Philadelphia. And then, Reid surprised most experts by selecting a quarterback, Houston's Kevin Kolb, with the 36th overall pick of the 2007 NFL Draft. Kolb is insurance for McNabb's long-term durability. But the Eagles do anticipate the 30-year-old McNabb to be ready for the season opener. If not, Feeley would be the short-term starter.

Running Backs Westbrook topped 1,000 rushing yards for the first time in his career, largely because he finally got a typical star back's total of 240 carries. His 1,217 rushing yards and 699 yards on 77 receptions established Westbrook once and for all among the league's elite running backs. Reid has tried to cut down on wear and tear by moving Westbrook outside at times and throwing him the ball beyond the behemoths on the line of scrimmage. That strategy requires a solid No. 2 back. The Eagles hope they found one in third-round pick Tony Hunt from Penn State. History is on their side. Westbrook and Duce Staley — two of the Eagles' best draft selections at the position — were both third-round picks. Ryan Moats needs to be more reliable to earn playing time. Fullback Thomas Tapeh emerged last season as a solid lead blocker and occasional threat to catch a pass out of the backfield.


Donovan McNabb

Receivers Reggie Brown has quietly established himself as the team's go-to receiver with 46 catches for 816 yards and eight touchdowns last year. Rookies Hank Baskett and Jason Avant were forced to play enough to warrant expanded roles in 2007. The Eagles replaced Donte Stallworth's speed by signing free agent Kevin Curtis, who has never played in a West Coast-style offense. If Curtis can make the transition, the Eagles should have exactly the kind of solid, share-the-ball receiving corps that

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE EAGLES

For the second year in a row, quarterback Donovan McNabb is returning to the Eagles lineup after a season-ending injury. The difference this time? The team went to the playoffs and won a game without him, and Jeff Garcia, the quarterback who enchanted Philadelphia fans during that run, is gone. A healthy McNabb should mean a productive offense. The real question is whether the defense can improve by moving a group of inexperienced young players into key roles. Defensive tackle Brodrick Bunkley, linebackers Omar Gaither and Chris Gocong and safety Sean Considine will be called upon to shore up the 15th-ranked defense in the NFL. A key on both sides — the running game. Long overlooked by coach Andy Reid, the run game got a boost when offensive coordinator Marty Mornhinweg started calling plays after McNabb's injury. Mornhinweg called on Brian Westbrook, who responded with over 1,900 yards from scrimmage in the best season of his career. The balance didn't just take some of the pressure off Garcia; it helped sustain longer drives and kept the defense from wearing down. Reid says Mornhinweg will continue to call the plays. McNabb will be back. Westbrook remains a nightmare of mismatches for defensive coordinators. If the defense can return to its mid-decade form, the Eagles will once again be the team to beat in the NFC East.

2006 Record: 10–6

2007 NFC East Prediction: 2nd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept. 9	at Green Bay	1:00 pm
Sept. 17	Washington	8:30 pm
Sept. 23	Detroit	1:00 pm
Sept. 30	at N.Y. Giants	8:15 pm
Week 5	BYE	
Oct. 14	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Oct. 21	Chicago	4:15 pm
Oct. 28	at Minnesota	1:00 pm
Nov. 4	Dallas	8:15 pm
Nov. 11	at Washington	1:00 pm
Nov. 18	Miami	1:00 pm
Nov. 25	at New England	8:15 pm
Dec. 2	Seattle	1:00 pm
Dec. 9	N.Y. Giants	1:00 pm
Dec. 16	at Dallas	4:15 pm
Dec. 23	at New Orleans	1:00 pm
Dec. 30	Buffalo	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

McNabb: Peter Brouillet
Westbrook: Paul Able/US Presswire

Eagles RB

Brian Westbrook

Brian Dawkins

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Wonder(lic) boy Veteran wide receivers often have trouble adapting to the complex routes and techniques required by Andy Reid's West Coast style offense. Free agent Kevin Curtis has an edge: His score of 48 (out of 50) on the Wonderlic intelligence test administered at the scouting combine is higher than any other current players. "I don't mind," Curtis says. "It makes people think I'm smart."

Bank error Given his numbers, you wouldn't think Brian Westbrook could be overpaid. But he was. Literally. Due to an accounting error, the Eagles paid him a $3 million bonus twice. Seems easy to fix, but Westbrook had already paid taxes on the payment before the error was discovered. Because of the salary cap implications, the Eagles were forced to file a grievance against Westbrook to avoid an NFL penalty. Oops.

McNabb "rehabb" With Miami's Daunte Culpepper struggling last year after apparently returning too soon from major knee surgery, the Eagles will be extra cautious with Donovan McNabb. Early signs were that he should be behind center when the Eagles open at Green Bay on Sept. 9. One difference: McNabb tore his ACL, but not the other ligaments in his right knee.

Reid favors. At tight end, L.J. Smith goes into his contract year with the chance to prove himself worthy of a big payday. Meanwhile, the Eagles will try to integrate Matt Schobel into the offense more than last year, when the former Bengals veteran caught a disappointing 14 passes.

Offensive Linemen Veteran right tackle Jon Runyan had been lobbying Reid publicly and privately for years to run the ball more often and take some of the sting out of the opposing pass rush. Runyan and left tackle William (formerly Tra) Thomas have started over 100 games together, making them two of the more reliable bookends of all time. They've been together so long, their heirs apparent have been stuck on hold or moved inside to guard. Left guard Todd Herremans saw his first action in relief of Thomas in 2005. Right guard Shawn Andrews, a 2004 first-round pick, was drafted as a possible replacement for Runyan. With Jamaal Jackson settling in nicely at center, only injuries are likely to provide playing time for linemen-in-waiting Winston Justice, Scott Young and Max Jean-Gilles.

Defensive Linemen The Eagles have a huge amount of money tied up in their defensive line, with big-ticket free agents Jevon Kearse and Darren Howard plus first-round draft picks Mike Patterson and Brodrick Bunkley. This year, they hope to get some bang for their buck. Kearse is expected back from a serious injury to his left knee. He and 2006 free agent Howard will rotate with Trent Cole at the end positions. The Eagles were embarrassingly vulnerable against the run last season, including their playoff loss in New Orleans. They are counting on 2006 first-round pick Bunkley to help plug up the middle of the defense. After a long contract holdout, Bunkley looked lost in his few chances to play in 2006. Ian Scott and former Colt pass rusher Montae Reagor, whose 2006 season was shortened by injuries sustained in a car accident, were signed to play in the Eagles' rotation at tackle.

Linebackers The Eagles' perennial trouble spot is getting another makeover. Spikes, the two-time Pro Bowler acquired in a trade with Buffalo, will start, likely on the weak side. But he could also be pressed into service on the strong side, if Chris Gocong isn't up to the job, or in the middle, if the coaches decide that Jeremiah Trotter is further along in the career decline that seemed to begin last year. Also in the mix — Omar Gaither, who played on the weak side last year but will likely move back inside; third-round pick Stewart Bradley from Nebraska; and Matt McCoy, who was displaced by Gaither last year.

Secondary The ageless Brian Dawkins has seen partners come and go during his stellar 11-year career. This year, the Eagles plan to keep Sean Considine in the starting strong safety slot he took over midway through last season. With deposed veteran Michael Lewis gone in free agency, Considine has tried to add some bulk to become a sturdier run stopper. Lito Sheppard and Sheldon Brown are back at the corners. William James, who was hampered by injuries after signing with the team last year, is being counted on as the nickel corner. The 6-footer could also be used to match up with some of the league's bigger receivers.

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Specialists Three-time Pro Bowl kicker David Akers and steady-enough punter Dirk Johnson will be back. There could be change, however, at the long snapping spot. Longtime snapper Mike Bartrum was injured last year and ably replaced by Jon Dorenbos. The Eagles gambled a draft pick last year on Olympic skier Jeremy Bloom, who had played football at Colorado. The speedy Bloom will get a chance to win the punt returning job. Bethel Johnson, signed away from the Vikings, could return kicks.

Coaching Staff Reid admitted he contemplated resigning after his two oldest sons were arrested in January in separate incidents involving drugs, a gun and a car accident. After a five-week leave of absence, during which he watched tape of potential draft picks at home, Reid returned, completely committed to trying to keep the Eagles at the top of the NFC East. There was change on the coaching staff, with longtime special teams coordinator John Harbaugh sliding over to the defensive staff. Reid promoted assistant Rory Segrest to special teams coach. The most intriguing question was whether Reid would continue to have Mornhinweg call plays. "He did a great job of it and he will probably continue to do that," Reid says.

Dawkins: Peter Brouillet; Brown: Bruce Schwartzman

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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
14	Feeley, A.J.	QB	6'3"	220	6	Oregon	FA-SD-06
10	Holcomb, Kelly	QB	6'2"	216	10	Middle Tennessee	T-Buf-07
5	McNabb, Donovan	QB	6'2"	240	8	Syracuse	D1-99
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
28	Buckhalter, Correll	RB	6'0"	217	6	Nebraska	D4-01
42	Davis, Jason	FB	5'10"	240	1	Illinois	FA-06
23	Moats, Ryan	RB	5'8"	210	2	Louisiana Tech	D3-05
38	Tapeh, Thomas	FB	6'1"	243	3	Minnesota	D5-04
49	Tuiasosopo, Zach	FB	6'2"	245	1	Washington	FA-06
36	Westbrook, Brian	RB	5'8"	203	5	Villanova	D3-02
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
81	Avant, Jason	WR	6'0"	212	1	Michigan	D4b-06
84	Baskett, Hank	WR	6'4"	220	1	New Mexico	T-Min-06
11	Bloom, Jeremy	WR	5'9"	180	1	Colorado	D5a-06
86	Brown, Reggie	WR	6'1"	197	2	Georgia	D2a-05
80	Curtis, Kevin	WR	5'11"	186	4	Utah State	FA-StL-07
19	Gasperson, Michael	WR	6'4"	220	1	San Diego	FA-05
16	Johnson, Bethel	WR	5'11"	200	4	Texas A&M	FA-Min-07
83	Lewis, Greg	WR	6'0"	180	4	Illinois	FA-03
89	Schobel, Matt	TE	6'5"	255	5	TCU	FA-Cin-06
82	Smith, L.J.	TE	6'3"	258	4	Rutgers	D2-03
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
73	Andrews, Shawn	G/T	6'4"	340	3	Arkansas	D1-04
59	Cole, Nick	C	6'0"	350	1	New Mexico State	FA-06
63	Harvey, Jasper	C	6'3"	305	1	San Diego State	FA-06
79	Herremans, Todd	G/T	6'6"	321	2	Saginaw Valley State	D4b-05
67	Jackson, Jamaal	C	6'4"	330	3	Delaware State	FA-03
62	Jean-Gilles, Max	G	6'3"	358	1	Georgia	D4a-06
74	Justice, Winston	T	6'6"	320	1	USC	D2-06
68	McCoy, Pat	T	6'5"	328	1	West Texas	FA-06
69	Runyan, Jon	T	6'7"	330	11	Michigan	FA-Ten-00
72	Thomas, William	T	6'7"	335	9	Florida State	D1-98
71	Young, Scott	G	6'4"	312	2	BYU	D5b-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Bunkley, Brodrick	DT	6'2"	306	1	Florida State	D1-06
58	Cole, Trent	DE	6'3"	270	2	Cincinnati	D5a-05
90	Howard, Darren	DE	6'3"	275	7	Kansas State	FA-NO-06
93	Kearse, Jevon	DE	6'4"	265	8	Florida	FA-Ten-04
95	McDougle, Jerome	DE	6'2"	264	4	Miami	D1-03
98	Patterson, Mike	DT	6'0"	292	2	USC	D1-05
77	Ramsey, LaJuan	DT	6'3"	291	1	USC	D6-06
94	Reagor, Montae	DT	6'3"	285	8	Texas Tech	FA-Ind-07
	Scott, Tan	DT	6'3"	302	4	Florida	FA-Chi-07
75	Thomas, Juqua	DE	6'2"	250	6	Oklahoma State	FA-05
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
56	Daniels, Torrance	LB	6'3"	248	1	Harding	FA-06
96	Gaither, Omar	LB	6'1"	235	1	Tennessee	D5b-06
57	Gocong, Chris	LB	6'2"	263	1	Cal Poly	D3-06
50	McCoy, Matt	LB	5'11"	230	2	San Diego State	D2b-05
53	Roper, Dedrick	LB	6'2"	245	2	Northwood	FA-05
51	Spikes, Takeo	LB	6'2"	245	9	Auburn	T-Buf-07
54	Trotter, Jeremiah	LB	6'1"	262	9	Stephen F. Austin	FA-04
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
24	Brown, Sheldon	CB	5'10"	200	5	South Carolina	D2b-02
37	Considine, Sean	S	6'0"	212	2	Iowa	D4a-05
20	Dawkins, Brian	FS	6'0"	210	11	Clemson	D2b-96
25	Fox, Dustin	CB	5'11"	200	2	Ohio State	FA-06
22	Hanson, Joselio	CB	5'9"	170	2	Texas Tech	FA-06
21	James, William	CB	6'0"	200	6	Western Illinois	FA-06
27	Mikell, Quintin	S	5'10"	206	4	Boise State	FA-03
35	Perry, Bruce	CB	5'10"	200	2	Maryland	D7b-04
26	Sheppard, Lito	CB	5'10"	194	5	Florida	D1-02
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
2	Akers, David	K	5'10"	200	8	Louisville	FA-99
46	Dorenbos, Jon	LS	6'0"	250	4	UTEP	FA-06
8	Johnson, Dirk	P	6'0"	205	4	Northern Colorado	FA-03

Head Coach: Andy Reid (80–48, 8–6 Playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Marty Mornhinweg
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Johnson

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	**80**	**Kevin Curtis**
WR	86	Reggie Brown
LT	72	William Thomas
LG	79	Todd Herremans
C	67	Jamaal Jackson
RG	73	Shawn Andrews
RT	69	Jon Runyan
TE	82	L.J. Smith
QB	5	Donovan McNabb
FB	38	Thomas Tapeh
RB	36	Brian Westbrook

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	93	Jevon Kearse
DT	98	Mike Patterson
DT	97	Brodrick Bunkley
DE	58	Trent Cole
SLB	57	Chris Gocong
MLB	54	Jeremiah Trotter
WLB	**51**	**Takeo Spikes**
CB	26	Lito Sheppard
CB	24	Sheldon Brown
SS	37	Sean Considine
FS	20	Brian Dawkins

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	2	David Akers
P	8	Dirk Johnson

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	14	A.J. Feeley
TE	89	Matt Schobel
WR	84	Hank Baskett
DT	**94**	**Montae Reagor**
CB	21	William James

New acquisitions in **bold**

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OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

WR	Kevin Curtis (StL)	
QB	Kelly Holcomb (Buf)	
WR	Bethel Johnson (Min)	
DT	Montae Reagor (Ind)	
DT	Ian Scott (Chi)	
LB	Takeo Spikes (Buf)	

Key Losses

QB	Jeff Garcia (TB)	
LB	Dhani Jones (FA)	
SS	Michael Lewis (SF)	
DT	Sam Rayburn (FA)	
WR	Donte Stallworth (NE)	
DT	Darwin Walker (Buf)	

2007 Draft

2.	Kevin Kolb	QB	6'3"	220	Houston
2.	Victor Abiamiri	DE	6'5"	271	Notre Dame
3.	Stewart Bradley	OLB	6'4"	256	Nebraska
3.	Tony Hunt	RB	6'0"	230	Penn State
5.	C.J. Gaddis	FS	6'0"	210	Clemson
5.	Brent Celek	TE	6'4"	261	Cincinnati
6.	Rashad Barksdale	CB	6'2"	210	Albany
7.	Nate Ilaoa	FB	5'8"	248	Hawaii

In Spikes, the Eagles added a proven playmaker at linebacker, a position they have struggled to fill with impact players during Andy Reid's tenure. Spikes, a two-time Pro Bowler with Buffalo, will try to return to form after a torn Achilles' tendon in 2005 and hamstring problems last year. In Curtis, they went for a speedy wide receiver to fill the void left by the departure of the popular Stallworth. Those were the two biggest names added during an offseason in which the Eagles decided to focus on continuity and developing their own young players. "We feel that we have good quality depth," Reid says. "We did a nice job of re-signing our own players." Fans were disappointed by the departures of Stallworth and Garcia, who won over the city with his fiery on-field presence. But Garcia chose to go to Tampa Bay, where he'd have a chance to start, while the Patriots outbid the Eagles for Stallworth.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Donovan McNabb	316	180	2,647	18	6
Jeff Garcia*	188	116	1,309	10	2
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Brian Westbrook	240	1,217	5.1	7	
Correll Buckhalter	83	345	4.2	2	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Brian Westbrook	77	699	9.1	4	
Reggie Brown	46	816	17.7	8	
L.J. Smith	50	611	12.2	5	

Kicking: David Akers, 18-23 FGs, 48-48 XPs, 102 points
Tackles: Jeremiah Trotter, 112; Brian Dawkins, 93
Sacks: Trent Cole, 8
Interceptions: Lito Sheppard, 6
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (10–6)

Sept.	10	at Houston	W	24–10
Sept.	17	N.Y. Giants (OT)	L	24–30
Sept.	24	at San Francisco	W	38–24
Oct.	2	Green Bay	W	31– 9
Oct.	8	Dallas	W	38–24
Oct.	15	at New Orleans	L	24–27
Oct.	22	at Tampa Bay	L	21–23
Oct.	29	Jacksonville	L	6–13
Nov.	12	Washington	W	27– 3
Nov.	19	Tennessee	L	13–31
Nov.	26	at Indianapolis	L	21–45
Dec.	4	Carolina	W	27–24
Dec.	10	at Washington	W	21–19
Dec.	17	at N.Y. Giants	W	36–22
Dec.	25	at Dallas	W	23– 7
Dec.	31	Atlanta	W	24–17
		Postseason		
Jan.	7	N.Y. Giants	W	23–20
Jan.	13	at New Orleans	L	24–27

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	381.4	2	+59.3
Rushing	124.0	11	+6.7
Passing	257.4	3	+52.6
Scoring	24.9	6	+4.2
Punt Returns	9.4	10	+0.7
Kick Returns	20.8	28	-1.7
Red Zone TD %	56.5	10	+5.7
Defense			
Total Defense	328.1	15	+6.0
Against Rush	136.4	26	+19.1
Against Pass	191.7	9	-13.1
Points Allowed	20.5	15T	-0.2
Interceptions	19	8T	+2.7
Sacks	40	8T	+3.7
Turnover Diff.	+5	9	-

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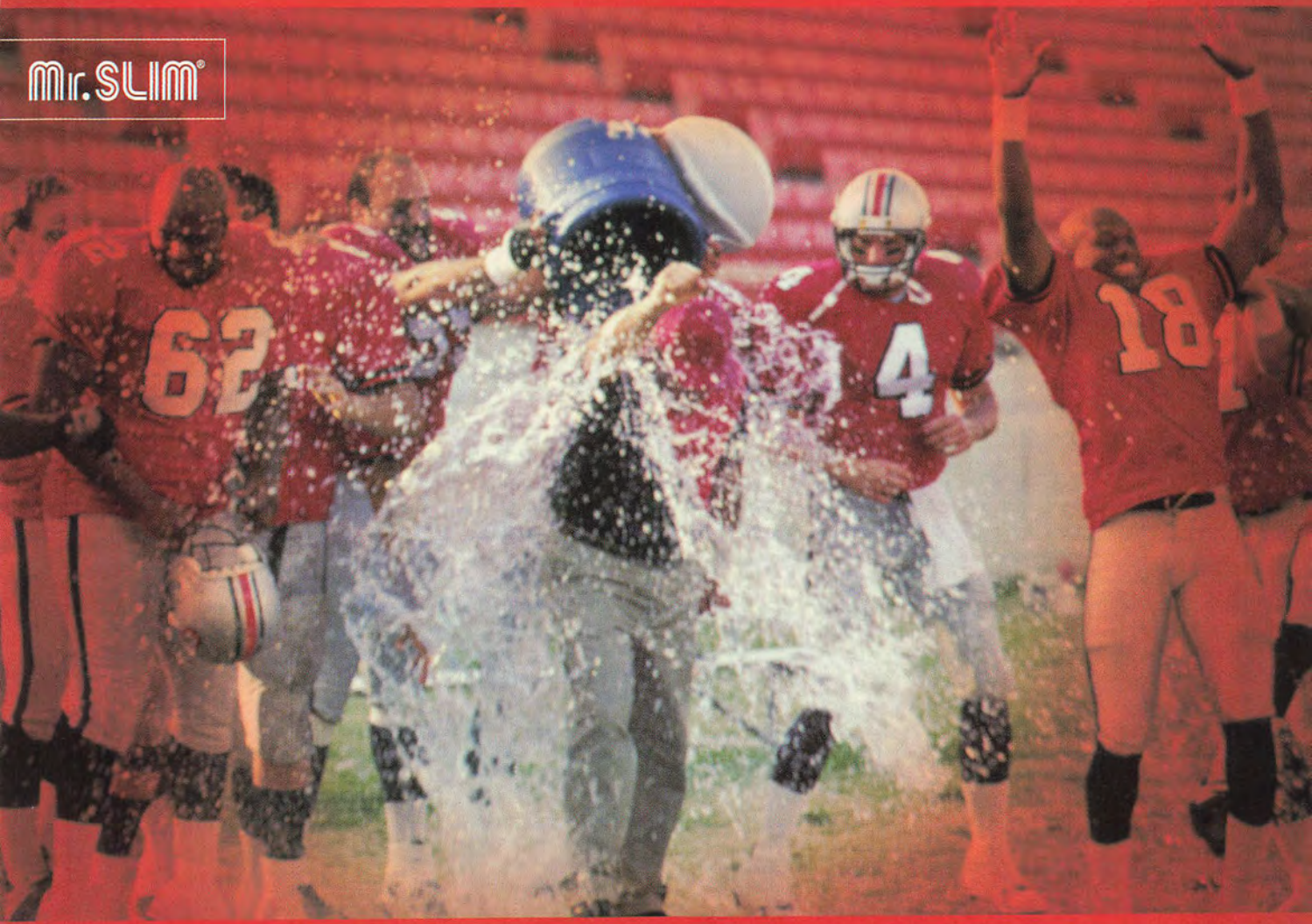

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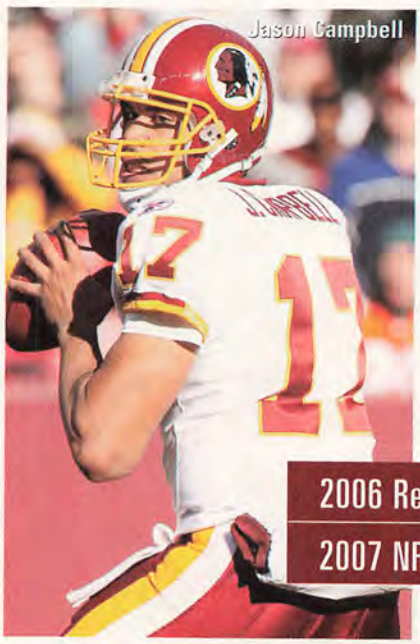
REDSKINS

In recent years, the joke in the nation's capital was that the Redskins were the most dominant team in the NFL from March to July. But this offseason, the notoriously high-spending team was a bit thiftier than usual. Washington hopes that the development of third-year quarterback Jason Campbell combined with the return of several key players from injuries is enough to get them back to the playoffs after a one-year layoff.

Quarterbacks Campbell sat for his entire rookie season as well as the first nine games of his sophomore campaign. By that time, the Redskins' hopes had gone down the drain, and the team used the final seven games to groom the 2005 first-round draft pick. Campbell was solid yet unspectacular, completing 53.1 percent of his passes for 1,297 yards, with 10 touchdowns and 6 interceptions. He didn't throw for more than 220 yards in any game. But Campbell never played with running back Clinton Portis, who was lost for the season because of a broken hand. This year, Campbell's comfort level should increase, as he will have had all of training camp to work with the first-team offense. Still, it remains to be seen if Campbell is an exceptional quarterback, or if he simply benefited from having two future first-round draft picks (Ronnie Brown and Cadillac Williams) in his backfield at Auburn. The ageless southpaw, Mark Brunell, should serve as a capable backup.

Running Backs When Portis broke his right hand in early November, Ladell Betts stepped in and became one of this team's few bright spots. The bruising back finished with 1,154 rushing yards and also added 53 catches for 445 yards. Betts, who topped the 100-yard mark in five of the last six games and is a strong between-the-tackles runner, caused rumblings that he might be a better fit for the offense than Portis, who excels by getting to the outside. But make no mistake: If Portis is healthy, he will be the primary back. Still, look for Betts to receive a few more carries per game than the seven he averaged before Portis went down. Expect the Redskins to keep the workload light for Portis during training camp. He dislocated his shoulder during the first preseason game last season, and later carped that he shouldn't have been playing in the game to begin with. Portis had shoulder surgery after last season, and is expected to be ready for camp. His health is the key to the Skins' success.

Receivers Santana Moss will probably never be as successful as he was during his 2005 Pro Bowl season. He just hopes last year's return to normalcy was more of an aberration than a trend. Thanks to hamstring injuries, a midseason quarterback change and an anemic offense, Moss' yardage totals were nearly cut in half from the previous year (from 1,483 to 790). Moss should benefit from having an entire preseason to work with Campbell, as well as an entire year to further digest Al Saunders' infamous 703-page playbook. If the Redskins get anything from their No. 2 receiver, Brandon Lloyd, it will be an improvement. Lloyd, acquired in a trade


Jason Campbell

with the 49ers last year, was one of the league's biggest busts, with just 23 catches and no touchdowns. Versatile receiver-return man Antwaan Randle El also needs to step up his game during his second term in Washington. The steady fourth-year tight end and H-back, Chris Cooley, has established himself as a reliable playmaker.

Offensive Linemen The only hole in the starting offense this offseason came at left guard, after Derrick Dockery cashed in with a seven-year, $49 million deal with the Buffalo Bills. The Redskins did not sign a big-name replacement, so they will choose from a pool of candidates that is highlighted by Todd Wade, a converted tackle. With Campbell, a righty, having replaced the southpaw Brunell, the position becomes

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE REDSKINS

The good news is that many of the key parts remain from the 2005 playoff team that lost to the eventual NFC-champion Seattle Seahawks. The bad news is most of the key parts also remain from last season's disappointing 5–11 outfit. The Redskins' defense took a major dip last season, setting an NFL record for the fewest forced turnovers while also allowing a league-high 30 passing touchdowns. Furthermore, the team's most pressing need — a pass rusher — was not addressed this offseason. The team upgraded its secondary by signing cornerback Fred Smoot and using its first-round draft pick on safety LaRon Landry, but if the quarterback has all day to throw, it will hardly matter. On offense, much will hinge on the development of quarterback Jason Campbell. The 6'4" righty sat for a year and a half before starting the final seven games of last season. Even if he disappoints, he should be an upgrade from last year's opening-game starter, Mark Brunell. Campbell has an able arm, but he won't be asked to do too much, because he will have two capable running backs in Clinton Portis and Ladell Betts. Coach Joe Gibbs has seemingly unending leeway in Washington thanks to the three Super Bowls he won during his first stint with this franchise. But this is the fourth year of his five-year contract, and the time for Lombardi Trophy number four is running out.

2006 Record: 5–11

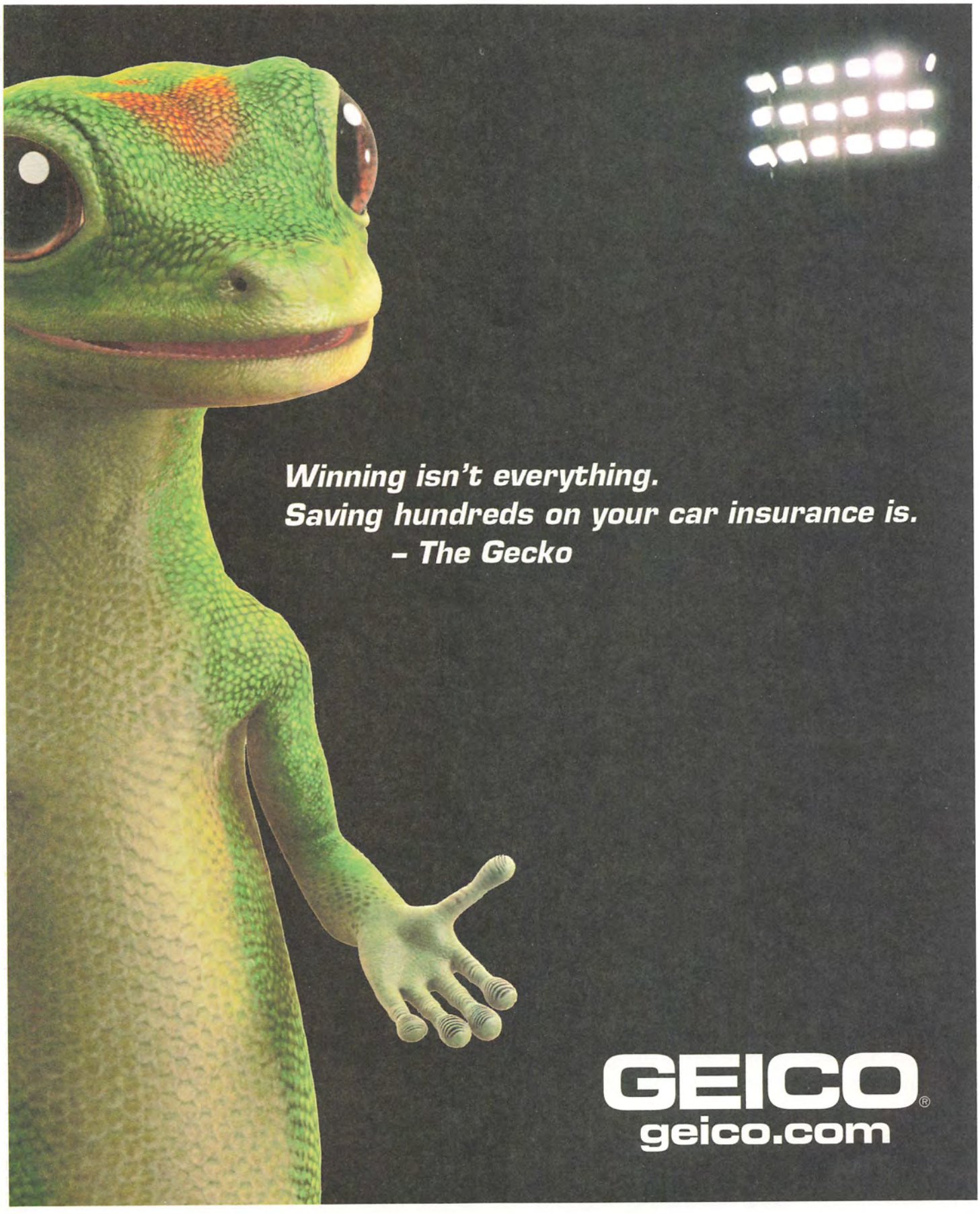
2007 NFC East Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Miami	1:00 pm
Sept.	17	at Philadelphia	8:30 pm
Sept.	23	N.Y. Giants	4:15 pm
Week	4	BYE	
Oct.	7	Detroit	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Green Bay	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	Arizona	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	at New England	4:15 pm
Nov.	4	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at Dallas	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	at Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	Buffalo	1:00 pm
Dec.	6	Chicago	8:15 pm
Dec.	16	at N.Y. Giants	8:15 pm
Dec.	23	at Minnesota	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	Dallas	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Campbell: Bruce Schwartzman; Portis: Steve Moore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Redskins RB

Clinton Portis

Santana Moss

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Take is away Last season the Redskins' defense set an NFL record for the fewest forced turnovers. They took the ball from the opponent just 12 times. No other defense forced fewer than 19 turnovers last year. Washington was also next-to-last in total defense, allowing 355.5 yards per game.

Pick me, coach Through various trades, the Redskins have been short on draft picks in recent years. This season, they had no second, third or fourth round selections. "I've seen a lot of people make comical statements about us not liking the draft," Redskins coach Joe Gibbs says. "We love the draft. We love any way of getting a player."

The Big House FedEx Field is the largest stadium in the NFL, seating 91,704 people.

Go figure Running back Clinton Portis had just one 100-yard rushing game before he was injured in early November. After the injury, his replacement, Ladell Betts, had five.

No, the other Palmer Unfortunately for the Redskins, the Palmer they selected in the sixth round of this year's draft was the UTEP signal-caller Jordan, and not his older brother, Carson, who stars for the Cincinnati Bengals.

even more important, as it is the quarterback's blind side. Chris Samuels is coming off another Pro Bowl appearance, but last year's selection may have been based more on reputation than performance. Samuels had minor left-knee surgery during the offseason. Toward the end of last year, the offensive linemen were giddy as the team returned to a run-first mentality.

Defensive Linemen Last season, the Redskins' pass rush was about as effective as an umbrella with a hole in it. Washington registered a league-low 19 sacks, six fewer than the next closest squad. But the free-spending Redskins did not sign a pass-rusher. The team figured to address the need in the draft but had just one pick in the first four rounds and used it on a safety. There were high expectations for defensive end Andre Carter after he signed a free agent deal last year. Though Carter was a disappointment early, he thrived down the stretch, registering sacks in four of the last five games. Defensive tackle Cornelius Griffin has battled injuries the past two seasons, but when healthy, he is among the best in the league. But this unit is still lacking a game-changing player.

Linebackers Though a solid contributor, Lemar Marshall showed he is not the answer at middle linebacker. So the Redskins signed the 32-year-old veteran London Fletcher-Baker, who played for assistant head coach-defense Gregg Williams when both were with the Buffalo Bills. That Fletcher-Baker is already familiar with Williams' scheme and demands is a big plus, and should make the switch a smooth one. Marcus Washington, the heart and soul of this defense, had surgeries on his left elbow and left hip during the offseason. He might be at less than 100 percent at the start of training camp. The Redskins selected Rocky McIntosh in the second round of the 2006 draft, but the former University if Miami star was used sparingly as a rookie. Look for his role to increase.

Defensive Backs One of the few highlights from a forgettable '06 season was Pro Bowl safety Sean Taylor's big hit on Bills punter Brian Moorman during the all-star game in Honolulu. The fourth-year safety, also known as "Meast" (half man, half beast), has developed into one of the most feared hitters in the league. One year after making Adam Archuleta the highest-paid safety in NFL history, the Skins traded him to the Bears for a sixth-round draft pick and selected his replacement, LSU safety LaRon Landry, with the sixth overall pick of the draft. Landry and Taylor could become the top safety tandem in the NFL. But if Pierson Prioleau is fully recovered from his torn ACL, look for him to begin the season as the starter. At cornerback, Fred Smoot returns after a two-year stint with the Vikings. He joins a crowded unit that also includes Carlos Rogers, Shawn Springs and newly signed David Macklin. The team might part with Springs, 32, who suffered a sports hernia, a pulled hamstring and a broken shoulder last season. The secondary allowed a league-high 30 passing touchdowns and registered a league-low six interceptions last season, so, there's nowhere to go but up.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Chris Cooley, TE
Has had three straight seasons with at least six touchdown catches.
Clinton Portis, RB
Franchise back was by injuries last season, and that has Washington's coaches considering reducing his workload in 2007.

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Specialists Three different kickers took field goals for the Redskins last season, and their combined 73.3 success rate ranked 27th in the league. The injury-plagued John Hall was released, so Shaun Suisham enters the season as the starting kicker. After being released by Dallas early last year, Suisham was signed by the Skins and went 9-for-11 on field goals, including a 52-yarder. Randle El remains one of the most dangerous punt returners in the league. Third-string running back Rock Cartwright proved invaluable on special teams.

Coaching Staff It's hard to believe Gibbs has been back at the helm for four seasons. After reaching the NFC semifinals in 2005, the team regressed last year, when offensive guru Saunders was lured to Washington from Kansas City. Redskins fans expected an unending flurry of touchdowns and field goals, but it never happened. The players seemed to have trouble grasping his intricate scheme, and by season's end, the team had returned to the more run-based style of Gibbs. With most of the offense intact, the pressure is on Saunders to have better results in year two. Williams is probably thrilled to have Fletcher-Baker at middle linebacker calling the signals for his defense, which is coming off one of the statistically worst seasons in league history.

Moss: Bruce Schwartzman; Cooley: Steve Moore

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
8	Brunell, Mark	QB	6'1"	217	14	Washington	T-Jac-04
17	Campbell, Jason	QB	6'4"	230	2	Auburn	D1-05
15	Collins, Todd	QB	6'4"	228	12	Michigan	FA-KC-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
46	Betts, Ladell	RB	5'10"	223	5	Iowa	D2-02
23	Blaylock, Derrick	RB	5'9"	210	5	Stephen F. Austin	FA-NYJ-07
30	Broughton, Nehemiah	FB	5'11"	255	2	The Citadel	D7-05
31	Cartwright, Rock	RB	5'7"	215	5	Kansas State	D7-02
26	Portis, Clinton	RB	5'11"	212	5	Miami	T-Den-04
45	Sellers, Mike	FB	6'3"	278	7	Walla Walla CC	FA-04
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
47	Cooley, Chris	TE	6'3"	250	3	Utah State	D3-04
11	Espy, Mike	WR	5'11"	195	1	Ole Miss	FA-06
12	Harris, Steven	WR	5'10"	183	1	Arkansas	FA-06
86	Kozlowski, Brian	TE	6'3"	265	13	Connecticut	FA-06
85	Lloyd, Brandon	WR	6'0"	192	4	Illinois	T-SF-06
89	Moss, Santana	WR	5'10"	190	6	Miami	T-NYJ-05
82	Randle El, Antwaan	WR	5'10"	192	5	Indiana	FA-Pit-06
83	Thrash, James	WR	6'0"	205	10	Missouri Southern	T-Phi-04
87	Yoder, Todd	TE	6'4"	262	7	Vanderbilt	FA-Jac-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
76	Jansen, Jon	T	6'6"	308	7	Michigan	D2-99
69	Molinaro, Jim	OL	6'6"	310	3	Notre Dame	D5-04
62	Pucillo, Mike	OL	6'4"	311	4	Auburn	FA-Cle-06
61	Rabach, Casey	C	6'4"	295	5	Wisconsin	FA-Bal-05
60	Samuels, Chris	T	6'5"	310	7	Alabama	D1-00
77	Thomas, Randy	G	6'5"	310	8	Mississippi State	FA-NYJ-03
74	Wade, Todd	G	6'8"	317	7	Ole Miss	FA-Hou-06
72	Whitley, Taylor	OL	6'4"	305	4	Texas A&M	FA-Den-06
68	Wilder, Sam	OL	6'5"	297	1	Colorado	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
79	Alexander, Lorenzo	DT	6'1"	301	1	California	FA-06
73	Boschetti, Ryan	DT	6'4"	305	3	UCLA	FA-04
99	Carter, Andre	DE	6'4"	265	6	California	FA-SF-06
93	Daniels, Phillip	DL	6'3"	290	11	Georgia	FA-Chi-04
92	Evans, Demetric	DL	6'3"	285	5	Georgia	FA-Dal-04
64	Golston, Kedric	DT	6'4"	292	1	Georgia	D6-06
91	Green, Jamal	DE	6'2"	258	2	Miami	FA-06
96	Griffin, Cornelius	DT	6'3"	310	7	Alabama	FA-NYG-04
94	Montgomery, Anthony	DT	6'5"	305	1	Minnesota	D5-06
95	Salave'a, Joe	DL	6'3"	317	8	Arizona	FA-SD-04
78	Sykes, Joe	DE	6'2"	266	1	Southern A&M	FA-06
97	Wynn, Renaldo	DL	6'3"	285	10	Notre Dame	FA-Jac-02
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Campbell, Khary	LB	6'3"	232	5	Bowling Green	FA-NYJ-03
59	Fletcher-Baker, London	LB	5'10"	246	9	John Carroll	FA-Buf-07
57	Holdman, Warrick	LB	6'1"	243	8	Texas A&M	FA-Cle-05
98	Marshall, Lemar	LB	6'2"	232	5	Michigan State	FA-01
52	McIntosh, Rocky	LB	6'2"	231	1	Miami	D2-06
58	Posey, Jeff	LB	6'4"	249	9	Southern Miss	FA-Buf-06
59	Trucks, Anthony	LB	6'1"	230	1	Oregon	FA-06
53	Washington, Marcus	LB	6'3"	250	7	Auburn	FA-Ind-04
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
37	Doughty, Reed	S	6'1"	210	1	Northern Colorado	D6-06
34	Eubanks, John	CB	5'10"	173	1	Southern Miss	FA-06
39	Fox, Vernon	S	5'10"	200	5	Fresno State	FA-Det-06
32	Jimoh, Ade	DB	6'1"	195	4	Utah State	FA-03
38	Macklin, David	CB	5'10"	206	7	Penn State	FA-Ari-07
20	Prioleau, Pierson	S	5'11"	185	8	Virginia Tech	FA-Buf-05
22	Rogers, Carlos	CB	6'0"	195	2	Auburn	D1-05
27	Smoot, Fred	CB	5'11"	178	6	Mississippi State	FA-Min-07
24	Springs, Shawn	CB	6'0"	200	10	Ohio State	FA-Sea-04
	Stoutmire, Omar	S	5'11"	205	11	Fresno State	FA-NO-07
21	Taylor, Sean	S	6'2"	232	3	Miami	D1-04
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
71	Albright, Ethan	LS	6'5"	265	12	North Carolina	FA-Buf-01
4	Frost, Derrick	P	6'2"	202	3	Northern Iowa	FA-Cle-05
6	Suisham, Shaun	K	6'0"	205	2	Bowling Green	FA-Dal-06

Head Coach: Joe Gibbs (145–87, 17–6 playoffs)
Assistant Head Coach – Offense: Al Saunders
Assistant Head Coach – Defense: Gregg Williams

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	89	Santana Moss
WR	85	Brandon Lloyd
LT	60	Chris Samuels
LG	74	Todd Wade
C	61	Casey Rabach
RG	77	Randy Thomas
RT	76	Jon Jansen
TE	47	Chris Cooley
QB	17	Jason Campbell
FB	45	Mike Sellers
RB	26	Clinton Portis

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	99	Andre Carter
DT	96	Cornelius Griffin
DT	64	Kedric Golston
DE	93	Philip Daniels
SLB	53	Marcus Washington
MLB	**59**	**London Fletcher-Baker**
WLB	52	Rocky McIntosh
CB	24	Shawn Springs
CB	22	Carlos Rogers
SS	20	Pierson Prioleau
FS	21	Sean Taylor

SPECIAL TEAMS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	6	Shaun Suisham
P	4	Derrick Frost

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	8	Mark Brunell
WR	82	Antwaan Randle El
RB	46	Ladell Betts
CB	**27**	**Fred Smoot**
S		**LaRon Landry**

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: FedEx Field (91,665, grass)
Surface: Grass
www.redskins.com
Ticket Info: 301-276-6800
Training Camp: Redskins Park

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions		Key Losses	
LB	London Fletcher-Baker (Buf)	S	Adam Archuleta (Chi)
CB	David Macklin (Ari)	G	Derrick Dockery (Buf)
CB	Fred Smoot (Min)	K	John Hall (FA)
S	Omar Stoutmire (NO)	S	Troy Vincent (FA)

2007 Draft

1.	LaRon Landry	FS	6'2"	205	LSU
5.	Dallas Sartz	OLB	6'5"	235	USC
6.	H.B. Blades	ILB	5'11"	237	Pittsburgh
6.	Jordan Palmer	QB	6'6"	231	UTEP
7.	Tyler Ecker	TE	6'6"	269	Michigan

The Redskins hope Fletcher-Baker can fill the quarterback-of-the-defense void that has been there since Antonio Pierce departed for the New York Giants two seasons ago. But at 32 years old, it seems unlikely that his peak didn't come during his time with the Buffalo Bills. Fans love the talkative Smoot, but he is not a shut-down corner. Expect to see first-round draft pick Landry on a highlight reel or two, especially playing alongside athletic free safety, Sean Taylor. But also expect it to take the former LSU star time to digest Gregg Williams' intricate scheme. The offensive line will have to make up for the loss of Dockery, the left guard. Todd Wade is the odds-on-favorite, though he's a converted tackle and has never played guard before.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Mark Brunell	260	162	1,789	8	4
Jason Campbell	207	110	1,297	10	6
Antwaan Randle El	2	3	88	1	0
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Ladell Betts	245	1,154	4.7		4
Clinton Portis	127	523	4.1		7
T.J. Duckett*	38	132	3.5		2
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Chris Cooley	57	734	12.9		6
Santana Moss	55	790	14.4		6
Ladell Betts	53	445	8.4		1
Antwaan Randle El	32	351	11.0		3

Kicking: Shaun Suisham, 9-11 FGs, 14-14 XPs, 41 points
Tackles: Sean Taylor, 111; Lemar Marshall, 104
Sacks: Andre Carter, 6
Interceptions: Six players tied with 1

2006 RESULTS (5–11)

Sept.	11	Minnesota	L	16–19
Sept.	17	at Dallas	L	10–27
Sept.	24	at Houston	W	31–15
Oct.	1	Jacksonville (OT)	W	36–30
Oct.	8	at N.Y. Giants	L	3–19
Oct.	15	Tennessee	L	22–25
Oct.	22	at Indianapolis	L	22–36
Nov.	5	Dallas	W	22–19
Nov.	12	at Philadelphia	L	3–27
Nov.	19	at Tampa Bay	L	17–20
Nov.	26	Carolina	W	17–13
Dec.	3	Atlanta	L	14–24
Dec.	10	Philadelphia	L	19–21
Dec.	17	at New Orleans	W	16–10
Dec.	24	at St. Louis (OT)	L	31–37
Dec.	30	N.Y. Giants	L	28–34

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	327.7	13	+5.6
Rushing	138.5	4	+21.2
Passing	189.2	21	-15.6
Scoring	19.2	20	-1.5
Punt Returns	8.8	14	+0.1
Kick Returns	22.3	19	-0.2
Red Zone TD %	50.0	15T	-0.8
Defense			
Total Defense	355.5	31	+33.4
Against Rush	137.3	27	+20.0
Against Pass	218.2	23	+13.4
Points Allowed	23.5	27	+2.8
Interceptions	6	32	-10.3
Sacks	19	32	-17.3
Turnover Diff.	-5	23T	-

BEARS

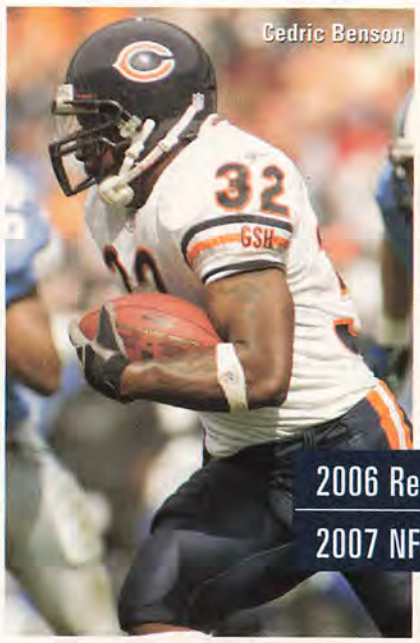
Head coach Lovie Smith has a new, long-term deal through 2011 worth about $5 million a year, and he's got his own guy, Bob Babich, as the defensive coordinator. More than ever, this is Smith's team from top to bottom, for better or worse.

But, unlike last season, when the Bears took a crucial step from 11–5 playoff qualifier to 13–3 Super Bowl participant, Smith's team won't have all 22 starters back in 2007. The leading rusher of the past two seasons, Thomas Jones, was traded. The starting nose tackle, Tank Johnson, served 60 days in jail, and the Bears were hoping he would avoid a league suspension for his off-the-field foibles. Two-time Pro Bowl weak-side linebacker Lance Briggs has threatened to sit out the season rather than grovel for $7.2 million as the Bears' franchise player.

Stud defensive tackle Tommie Harris, who also was voted to the past two Pro Bowls, is returning from last year's season-ending hamstring surgery, and safety Mike Brown, a Pro Bowl pick in 2005, is working back from a season-ending foot injury.

Quarterbacks After staying healthy for an entire season for the first time in his four-year career, Rex Grossman is expected to eliminate some of the inconsistencies that plagued him in a roller-coaster 2006. Grossman has shown the ability to direct the Bears' offense with surgical precision, but he has also demonstrated too frequently a disastrous tendency to self-destruct. Smith was adamant last season that Grossman was his quarterback, period. But the former first-round pick will not be given the luxury of throwing another 20 interceptions in 2007. "He's still our starting quarterback," general manager Jerry Angelo says, "and we hope that all that he went through in terms of his game experience will manifest itself into the offseason, and he'll take another step." The Bears shelled out serious money before the 2006 season to bring in experienced veteran Brian Griese as the backup, and they probably won't allow him to languish on the bench this season if the offense and Grossman sputter. Kyle Orton has the best size and strongest arm at the position, but he never took a snap in 2006.

Running Backs This year the Bears will hand the ball and the featured role to Cedric Benson, the fourth overall pick in the 2005 draft. His own nagging injuries and the back-to-back productive seasons by Jones limited Benson to a backup role, but his 157 carries last season were an increase of 90 over his rookie season. Benson is bigger, faster and a more powerful runner than Jones, and the Bears are convinced that his time is now. Benson has missed time with shoulder and knee injuries, but he was a workhorse for four years at Texas. Five-year veteran Adrian Peterson, a record-setting runner at Georgia Southern but mostly a special teams standout in the NFL, should move into the backup role. He's been an effective change-of-pace and third-down back in limited playing time in the past. Third-round draft pick Garrett Wolfe was too small for a lot of teams but too productive at Northern Illinois for the Bears to pass up. He has home-run ability if they can find a niche for him.


Cedric Benson

Receivers Muhsin Muhammad is still a tough, physical threat in the middle of the field, but he's no longer a true No. 1 wideout in his 12th season. Muhammad led the team with 60 catches and 863 receiving yards, and he is still more than a possession receiver and is capable of making difficult catches in traffic. Skinny, speedy Bernard Berrian took another big step last season (51 catches, 775 yards, 15.2-yard average) and could be on the verge of becoming a go-to receiver if he can stay healthy. Mark Bradley is big, fast and strong, but he rebounded slowly from a season-ending knee injury in 2005 that derailed a promising rookie season and then was hampered by a separate leg injury. Bradley, who can also stretch the field, only caught 14 passes last season, but three went

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE BEARS

The offseason was a lot tougher than it should be for a Super Bowl team. There was jail time for Tank Johnson and the remaining threat of a league suspension. Pro Bowl linebacker Lance Briggs has threatened to sit out the season, and defensive coordinator Ron Rivera, whose group was one of the NFL's best, wasn't rehired. There is legitimate concern that quarterback Rex Grossman might lack the consistency to lead a productive offense. However, the defense still has Brian Urlacher and a deep, young, talented line, which should be enough to lead the Bears back to the playoffs. Tackle Anthony Adams and strong safety Adam Archuleta should improve the defense, but there isn't anyone on the roster who can fill Briggs' shoes if he follows through on his threat. Players and coaches alike are determined to take the final step this year, but to do so they'll need the defense to be at least as good as last season. They also need Grossman and the offense to play more consistently and take some stress off the defense. New featured runner Cedric Benson has the talent to lift the offense to a higher level if he's healthy for 16 games. The Bears' special teams are equal to any group in the NFL, and return specialist Devin Hester can change field position faster than anyone in the league. But, with a more difficult schedule in '07, a duplication of last year's 13–3 record is unlikely.

2006 Record: 13–3

2007 NFC North Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at San Diego	4:15 pm
Sept.	16	Kansas City	4:15 pm
Sept.	23	Dallas	8:15 pm
Sept.	30	at Detroit	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	at Green Bay	8:15 pm
Oct.	14	Minnesota	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Philadelphia	4:15 pm
Oct.	28	Detroit	1:00 pm
Week	9	BYE	
Nov.	11	at Oakland	4:15 pm
Nov.	18	at Seattle	8:15 pm
Nov.	25	Denver	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	N.Y. Giants	4:15 pm
Dec.	6	at Washington	8:15 pm
Dec.	17	at Minnesota	8:30 pm
Dec.	23	Green Bay	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	New Orleans	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Benson, Urlacher: Peter Brouillet

Bears LB

Brian Urlacher

Devin Hester

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Best in the league Going back to Week Six in 2005, the Bears have a 23–5 regular-season record, which is the best in the NFL, one game better than the Colts' 22–6.

No contest Last year the Bears became the first team in NFL history to win four straight home games by more than 25 points when they defeated the Lions 34–7, the Seahawks 37–6, the Bills 40–7 and the 49ers 41–10.

Protecting the lead Under Lovie Smith, the Bears have won 22 straight games when leading at halftime. Their only loss occurred in Smith's debut in 2004.

Take it back The Bears have an NFL-best 22 return touchdowns over the past three seasons. Rookie Devin Hester contributed an NFL-record six of them last season, returning three punts, two kickoffs and one missed field goal for scores.

Rock solid The Bears' defense was fifth last year in yards allowed (294.1 per game) and second in 2005 (281.8). It has held 15 opponents to 10 points or less over the past two seasons.

Best in the league II The Bears led the NFL with 44 takeaways in 2006 and had a 12-game streak in which they forced multiple turnovers, the longest streak in the NFL in three years.

for scores, and he averaged 20.1 yards per catch. Rashied Davis is a tough, little slot receiver with a knack for making big plays at crucial times. Tight end Desmond Clark, an eight-year veteran, enjoyed the most successful of his four seasons with the Bears (45 catches, 626 yards and six TDs). But he's 30 and has lots of mileage, so the Bears pounced on Miami's Greg Olsen with the 31st overall pick. He is potentially the most dangerous pass-catching tight end the Bears have had since Mike Ditka, and his deep speed can open things up for the wideouts.

Offensive Linemen Among the current starters, only right guard Roberto Garza will be under 30 when training camp gets under way. Left guard Ruben Brown is already 35, and left tackle John Tait is already 32. Right tackle Fred Miller will be 34 this season, and center Olin Kreutz is heading into his 10th NFL season and will be 30 before camp starts. But they started 14 games together last season and work cohesively as a unit, even though six-time Pro Bowler Kreutz is the only standout in the group. None of the backups shows much promise as a starter, with the possible exception of guard Terrence Metcalf, so it's imperative that the aging starters hold together for one more season.

Defensive Linemen It's hard to determine how strong the Bears will be up front this season because of question marks at tackle, most notably Johnson. The linchpin of the line, Harris, saw what have been his second straight Pro Bowl season end prematurely with a torn hamstring. He should make a full recovery by training camp, but the timetable is uncertain. Unrestricted free agent Anthony Adams, a former full-time starter with the 49ers before they converted to a 3-4 scheme, was added as insurance in case Johnson is lost for any length of time. If Johnson is on the field, Adams should be a valuable player in the DT rotation, where the Bears like to use four players. Backup tackle Alfonso Boone left via free agency, but the hope is that Dusty Dvoracek, a third-round draft choice who spent last season on injured reserve, will play effectively in the rotation this year. He remains an unknown quantity. Ends Alex Brown and Adewale Ogunleye need to play up to their salaries this season. They're both solid against the run but combined for only 13.5 sacks, barely more than the 12 that fifth-round rookie sensation Mark Anderson had by himself.

Linebackers With Briggs potentially around for a full season, this will again be an outstanding unit, led by Brian Urlacher, who is the face of the Bears and one of the NFL's impact defenders. After six Pro Bowls, Urlacher still believes he's getting better, a scary thought to opposing offenses. Briggs comes close to matching Urlacher tackle for tackle, but he doesn't make as many game-changing plays or have as much range. Hunter Hillenmeyer is underappreciated on the strong side, but he's smart, reliable and fundamentally sound. The only problem, which becomes magnified minus Briggs, is that there is no reliable depth. "Do I feel like somebody could come in and fill Lance's shoes?" Angelo says. "No. We have to see that. It's hard to replace Pro Bowl players when (or if) you lose them."

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Cedric Benson, RB
Will see a great opportunity (and a fantasy gain) following the trade of running mate Thomas Jones.
Bernard Berrian, WR
Home run hitter. Four of Berrian's six TDs last year came on passes of at least 34 yards.

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Defensive Backs The top three corners — Charles Tillman, Nathan Vasher and nickel back Ricky Manning Jr. — form an outstanding group. Trading for Adam Archuleta provides a big, physical run stopper. He'll either take over for the injury-prone Brown or allow him to move to free safety. "They're both excellent football players," says Smith, the Rams' defensive coordinator during Archuleta's best seasons. "Both of them are competitors. We think both fit in our system." There is plenty of depth, including Danieal Manning, who started 14 games at free safety as a rookie last year, and Chris Harris, a 13-game starter as a rookie in '05.

Specialists Kicker Robbie Gould, return specialist Devin Hester (NFL-record six kick-return touchdowns) and coverage ace Brendon Ayanbadejo all went to the Pro Bowl from what was arguably the best special-teams unit in the NFL. Punter Brad Maynard is a solid veteran and long-snapper Pat Mannelly is nearly perfect.

Coaching Staff It's difficult to imagine that this year's group is better without defensive coordinator Ron Rivera and quarterbacks coach Wade Wilson, but they should be more in sync with Smith's coaching philosophy. Still, with five new assistants, continuity could be a concern.

Hester: Peter Brouillet; Berrian: Jerry Lai/US Presswire

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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
14	Griese, Brian	QB	6'3"	214	9	Michigan	FA-TB-06
8	Grossman, Rex	QB	6'1"	217	4	Florida	D1b-03
18	Orton, Kyle	QB	6'4"	217	2	Purdue	D4-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
32	Benson, Cedric	RB	5'11"	220	2	Texas	D1-05
47	Johnson, Bryan	FB	6'1"	244	6	Boise State	T-Was-04
37	McKie, Jason	FB	5'11"	243	5	Temple	W-Dal-03
29	Peterson, Adrian	RB	5'10"	210	5	Georgia Southern	D6a-02
48	Runnels, J.D.	FB	5'11"	240	1	Oklahoma	D6a-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
86	Angulo, Richard	TE	6'8"	260	3	Western New Mex.	FA-Min-06
80	Berrian, Bernard	WR	6'1"	185	3	Fresno State	D3-04
16	Bradley, Mark	WR	6'2"	198	2	Oklahoma	D2-05
88	Clark, Desmond	TE	6'3"	249	8	Wake Forest	FA-Mia-03
17	Currie, Airese	WR	5'11"	185	1	Clemson	D5-05
81	Davis, Rashied	WR	5'9"	183	2	San Jose State	FA-05
85	Gilmore, John	TE	6'5"	257	5	Penn State	FA-NO-02
83	Hass, Mike	WR	6'1"	209	1	Oregon State	FA-06
87	Muhammad, Muhsin	WR	6'2"	215	11	Michigan State	FA-Car-05
84	Rideau, Brandon	WR	6'3"	200	2	Kansas	FA-Cle-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
74	Brown, Ruben	G	6'3"	300	12	Pittsburgh	FA-Buf-04
63	Garza, Roberto	G/C	6'2"	305	6	Texas A&M-Kingsville	FA-Atl-05
57	Kreutz, Olin	C	6'2"	292	9	Washington	D3-98
75	LeVoir, Mark	T	6'7"	310	1	Notre Dame	FA-06
60	Metcalf, Terrence	G	6'3"	318	5	Ole Miss	D3-02
69	Miller, Fred	T	6'7"	314	11	Baylor	FA-Ten-05
68	Oakley, Anthony	C/G	6'4"	298	1	Western Kentucky	FA-Cle-05
64	Reed, Tyler	G	6'4"	307	1	Penn State	D6b-06
78	St. Clair, John	T	6'5"	315	7	Virginia	FA-Mia-05
76	Tait, John	T	6'6"	312	8	BYU	FA-KC-04
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
73	Adams, Anthony	DT	6'0"	297	4	Penn State	FA-SF-07
97	Anderson, Mark	DE	6'4"	255	1	Alabama	D5-06
96	Brown, Alex	DE	6'3"	260	5	Florida	D4-02
72	Bryan, Copeland	DE	6'3"	253	1	Arizona	FA-06
98	Dvoracek, Dusty	DT	6'3"	303	1	Oklahoma	D3-06
90	Garay, Antonio	DT	6'3"	303	2	Boston College	FA-Cle-05
91	Harris, Tommie	DT	6'3"	295	3	Oklahoma	D1-04
71	Idonije, Israel	DL	6'6"	270	3	Manitoba	FA-Cle-03
99	Johnson, Tank	DT	6'3"	300	3	Washington	D2-04
93	Ogunleye, Adewale	DE	6'4"	260	6	Indiana	T-Mia-04
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
94	Ayanbadejo, Brendon	LB	6'1"	228	4	UCLA	T-Mia-05
55	Briggs, Lance	LB	6'1"	240	4	Arizona	D3-03
92	Hillenmeyer, Hunter	LB	6'4"	238	4	Vanderbilt	FA-GB-03
53	Joe, Leon	LB	6'1"	230	3	Maryland	FA-Ari-05
58	McClover, Darrell	LB	6'2"	226	3	Miami	FA-NYJ-06
45	Slay, Dwayne	LB	6'3"	210	1	Texas Tech	FA-06
54	Urlacher, Brian	LB	6'4"	258	7	New Mexico	D1-00
52	Williams, Jamar	LB	6'0"	234	1	Arizona State	D4-06
59	Wilson, Rod	LB	6'2"	230	1	South Carolina	D7-05
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
20	Archuleta, Adam	S	6'0"	223	6	Arizona State	T-Was-06
30	Brown, Mike	S	5'10"	207	7	Nebraska	D2-00
22	Everett, Tyler	S	5'11"	202	1	Ohio State	FA-Den-06
46	Harris, Chris	S	6'0"	205	2	UL Monroe	D6-05
23	Hester, Devin	CB	5'11"	186	1	Miami	D2b-06
38	Manning, Danieal	S	5'11"	196	1	Abilene Christian	D2a-06
24	Manning Jr., Ricky	CB	5'9"	188	4	UCLA	FA-Car-06
36	McGowan, Brandon	S	5'11"	205	2	Maine	FA-05
33	Tillman, Charles	CB	6'1"	196	4	UL Lafayette	D2-03
27	Turnbull, Nick	S	6'2"	222	1	FIU	W-Atl-06
31	Vasher, Nathan	CB	5'10"	180	3	Texas	D4a-04
21	Wesley, Dante	CB	6'1"	210	5	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	FA-Car-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
9	Gould, Robbie	K	6'0"	183	2	Penn State	FA-Bal-05
65	Mannelly, Patrick	LS	6'5"	265	9	Duke	D6b-98
4	Maynard, Brad	P	6'1"	186	10	Ball State	FA-NYG-01

Head Coach: Lovie Smith (29–19, 2–2 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Ron Turner
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Babich

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	87	Muhsin Muhammad
WR	80	Bernard Berrian
LT	76	John Tait
LG	74	Ruben Brown
C	57	Olin Kreutz
RG	63	Roberto Garza
RT	69	Fred Miller
TE	88	Desmond Clark
QB	8	Rex Grossman
FB	37	Jason McKie
RB	32	Cedric Benson

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	93	Adewale Ogunleye
DT	91	Tommie Harris
DT	99	Tank Johnson
DE	96	Alex Brown
SLB	92	Hunter Hillenmeyer
MLB	54	Brian Urlacher
WLB	55	Lance Briggs
CB	33	Charles Tillman
CB	31	Nathan Vasher
SS	**20**	**Adam Archuleta**
FS	30	Mike Brown

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	9	Robbie Gould
P	4	Brad Maynard

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	14	Brian Griese
TE	**82**	**Greg Olsen**
DT	**73**	**Anthony Adams**
DE	97	Mark Anderson
CB	24	Ricky Manning Jr.
RS	23	Devin Hester

New acquisitions in **bold**

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Training Camp: Olivet Nazarene, (Bourbonnais, Ill.)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

DT	Anthony Adams	(SF)
SS	Adam Archuleta	(Was)

Key Losses

DT	Alfonso Boone	(KC)
WR	Justin Gage	(Ten)
S	Todd Johnson	(StL)
RB	Thomas Jones	(NYJ)
S	Cameron Worrell	(Mia)

2007 Draft

1.	Greg Olsen	TE	6'4"	252	Miami
2.	Dan Bazuin	DE	6'3"	265	Central Michigan
3.	Garrett Wolfe	RB	5'7"	177	Northern Illinois
3.	Michael Okwo	ILB	5'11"	232	Stanford
4.	Josh Beekman	G	6'2"	321	Boston College
5.	Kevin Payne	FS	6'0"	216	UL Monroe
5.	Corey Graham	CB	6'0"	195	New Hampshire
7.	Trumaine McBride	CB	5'9"	185	Ole Miss
7.	Aaron Brant	T	6'7"	313	Iowa State

Jones was a productive workhorse the past two years. But the Bears believe Cedric Benson is a better player and that the time is now for the fourth overall pick in the 2005 draft to establish himself as a franchise back. Adams is insurance if the league decides to suspend starter Tank Johnson as expected. Adams has been a starter in the past with the 49ers. Archuleta provides a big, physical presence in the secondary in place of injury-prone Mike Brown. But Archuleta missed 10 games last season and 14 in 2004. If Brown is healthy, he could move to free safety and team with Archuleta. Olsen is the pass-catching tight end the Bears have needed for what seems like an eternity. Bazuin could contribute as a situational pass rusher, and so could Wolfe as a change-of-pace back.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Rex Grossman	480	262	3,193	23	20
Brian Griese	32	18	220	1	2

Rushing	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Thomas Jones*	296	1,210	4.1	6
Cedric Benson	157	647	4.1	6

Receiving	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Muhsin Muhammad	60	863	14.4	5
Bernard Berrian	51	775	15.2	6
Desmond Clark	45	626	13.9	6

Kicking: Robbie Gould, 32-36 FGs, 47-47 XPs, 143 points
Tackles: Brian Urlacher, 141; Lance Briggs, 130
Sacks: Mark Anderson, 12
Interceptions: Ricky Manning, 5; Charles Tillman, 5
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (13–3)

Sept.	10	at Green Bay	W	26– 0
Sept.	17	Detroit	W	34– 7
Sept.	24	at Minnesota	W	19–16
Oct.	1	Seattle	W	37– 6
Oct.	8	Buffalo	W	40– 7
Oct.	16	at Arizona	W	24–23
Oct.	29	San Francisco	W	41–10
Nov.	5	Miami	L	13–31
Nov.	12	at N.Y. Giants	W	38–20
Nov.	19	at N.Y. Jets	W	10– 0
Nov.	26	at New England	L	13–17
Dec.	3	Minnesota	W	23–13
Dec.	11	at St. Louis	W	42–27
Dec.	17	Tampa Bay (OT)	W	34–31
Dec.	24	at Detroit	W	26–21
Dec.	31	Green Bay	L	7–26
		Postseason		
Jan.	14	Seattle (OT)	W	27–24
Jan.	21	New Orleans	W	39–14
		Super Bowl		
Feb.	4	Indianapolis	L	17–29

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	324.9	15	+2.8
Rushing	119.9	15	+2.6
Passing	205.1	14	+0.3
Scoring	26.7	2T	+6.0
Punt Returns	12.1	2	+3.4
Kick Returns	23.3	9	+0.8
Red Zone TD %	48.0	18	-2.8
Defense			
Total Defense	294.1	5	-28.0
Against Rush	99.4	6	-17.9
Against Pass	194.8	11	-10.0
Points Allowed	15.9	3	-4.8
Interceptions	24	2	+7.7
Sacks	40	8T	+3.7
Turnover Diff.	+8	4T	-

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LIONS

Laughter — perhaps outright howling — would seem to be the acceptable response to any notion that the Detroit Lions are about to blossom into the NFL's next Cinderella darlings. But, then again, who anticipated New Orleans turning a 3–13 finish in 2005 into a playoff run in 2006?

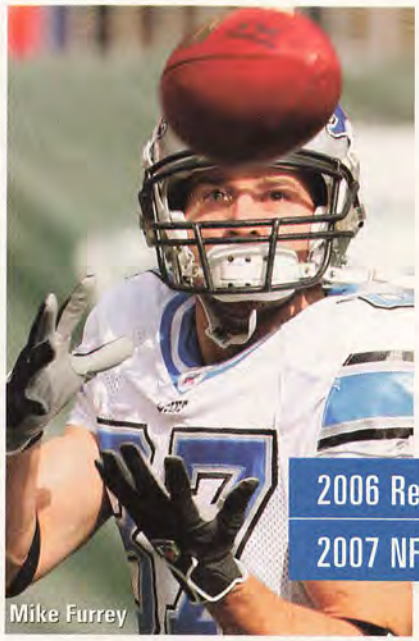
The Lions have strung together six consecutive seasons of 10-plus losses and have a 24–72 record since Matt Millen took over as team president in 2001. But in Detroit, old habits are hard to break.

Now they'll try to right themselves with a 35-year-old journeyman quarterback, a tailback hobbled by the lingering Lisfranc foot injury, and a mess of question marks on defense. The debris from three recent first-round draft busts — quarterback Joey Harrington (2002), along with receivers Charles Rogers (2003) and Mike Williams (2005) — and numerous other mishaps have further slowed the Lions' efforts to drag themselves from the muck.

How do they change things overnight? A great deal of offense would help. Score early and force opposing offenses into being more predictable by playing catch-up. If they can stay healthy — and if quarterback Jon Kitna still has some pop in his arm — this could be the Lions' most potent offense of the 21st Century. Which, in the Motor City, ain't saying a whole lot in the years A.B. ("After Barry" — as in Sanders).

Quarterbacks Kitna's return at age 35 was set in stone even during the miseries of 2006 when he drew rave reviews from coach Rod Marinelli and offensive coordinator Mike Martz. Kitna took every snap and broke the club records for pass attempts (596) and completions (372) while throwing for 4,208 yards — second in Lions history only to Scott Mitchell's 1995 performance. Ultimately, of course, quarterbacks are judged by winning. Harrington, the third overall pick of the '02 draft, was all but tarred and feathered for losing. Harrington's career won-loss record as a starter is now 23–43 (.349). Kitna's record as a starter over the same five years (2002-06) is 16–31 (.340). Clearly, his dazzling stats in Harrington's absence afforded Kitna a Detroit honeymoon in '06. This spring, the organization passed on Notre Dame quarterback Brady Quinn and took Michigan State's Drew Stanton in Round 2 (43rd overall). Dan Orlovsky will back up Kitna while Stanton learns Martz's demanding system.

Running Backs Will Kevin Jones recover from a seriously torn-up foot — the dreaded Lisfranc? If so, when? If not, is Tatum Bell ready to step up? All eyes were on Denver when the Broncos dealt Bell, their latest 1,000-yard rusher, plus veteran tackle George Foster for Pro Bowl cornerback Dre' Bly (and a swap of late-round draft picks). But Bly had worn out his welcome in Detroit and would likely have been released this summer for salary cap reasons. Bell gives the Lions a speedy insurance policy if Jones' recovery is slow, and a solid 1-2 punch should Jones rebound swiftly. The Lions last season were woefully inadequate in the red zone. T.J. Duckett, a former star at Michigan


Mike Furrey

State, packs some goal line wallop and, like Bell, is only 26. Jones is 25. With the aging Cory Schlesinger departing for Miami, Shawn Bryson gives Martz a versatile fullback — when he decides he wants to field one. Martz is also fond of lining up tight ends at fullback.

Receivers When Mike Furrey — who recorded 98 catches for 1,086 yards last year — chose to re-sign and Rams free agent Shaun McDonald decided to reunite with Martz, ample playing time for each seemed assured. But that was before the Lions used their second overall pick on Georgia Tech's highly touted Calvin Johnson, the consensus can't-miss player of the '07 draft. If his NFL adjustment is swift, then Johnson, Furrey and Pro Bowler Roy Williams could give

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE LIONS

No matter how they fare on the scoreboard, expect a great deal more fight and physical presence out of the Lions now that second-year coach Rod Marinelli has had a season to spread his infectious "never quit" philosophy. But Marinelli knows that philosophy has to translate into victories very soon. How? A meteoric rise by rookie Calvin Johnson would help. Most wide receivers need time to adjust to the NFL, and offensive fortunes could swing heavily on how quickly Johnson develops. Tailback Kevin Jones has to bounce back from a serious Lisfranc injury, or the full backfield load could fall on ex-Denver running back Tatum Bell. The offensive line should improve with the additions of guard Edwin Mulitalo and tackle George Foster. But the defense needs more than a few pleasant surprises from the lackluster likes of end Kalimba Edwards, a heretofore brittle bunch of linebackers and a paper-thin corps of defensive backs that needs corners Fernando Bryant and Stanley Wilson to emerge and remain healthy. With the Bears still clearly the class of the division and the Packers making strides as well, the Lions appear to be at least another year away from a serious postseason run, though at least doubling last season's win total seems like a reasonable goal.

2006 Record: 3–13

2007 NFC North Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Oakland	4:15 pm
Sept.	16	Minnesota	4:05 pm
Sept.	23	at Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	Chicago	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	at Washington	1:00 pm
Week 6		BYE	
Oct.	21	Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	at Chicago	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	Denver	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	at Arizona	4:15 pm
Nov.	18	N.Y. Giants	4:15 pm
Nov.	22	Green Bay	12:30 pm
Dec.	2	at Minnesota	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	Dallas	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	at San Diego	4:15 pm
Dec.	23	Kansas City	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	at Green Bay	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Furrey, Williams: Peter Brouillet

Lions WR

Roy Williams

Ernie Sims

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Packing in viewers If this truly is the final season of Green Bay's Brett Favre, the Lions could be more than casual onlookers. Detroit hosts the Packers in the traditional Thanksgiving Day affair, then will be in Green Bay Dec. 30 for what could be the Lambeau finale and final regular-season game of Favre's storied career.

Mr. Handyman After leading the Rams with four interceptions as a defensive back in '05, Detroit's Mike Furrey led the NFC with 98 receptions in '06 — the first time in NFL history a healthy player has gone from zero to 98 in one year.

Seeing Redding With Pro Bowler Shaun Rogers out, Cory Redding moved from defensive end to tackle for the final 11 games. Despite his abbreviated stay, Redding was second in sacks (eight) among all NFL defensive tackles in '06. Overall, he led the NFL in sacks over the final 12 weeks of the season.

Number crunching Roy Williams led the NFC in receiving yards (1,310) and had an NFL-best four games of 135 or more yards in receptions … Veteran Jon Kitna became the first quarterback in Lions history to take every snap for a season.

Martz a receiving trio the equal of his Rams' "Greatest Show on Turf" corps of Torry Holt, Isaac Bruce and Az Hakim. A fierce blocker, tight end Dan Campbell blossomed as a surprise threat under Martz last season (21 receptions, 308 yards, 4 TDs). But it's the big bodies of Williams and Johnson that could give defenses fits and will be essential to the Lions' offense.

Offensive Linemen Injuries blew up the Lions' veteran line last season. Only steady, dependable Jeff Backus at left tackle and center Dominic Raiola withstood the 16-game rigors. Right guard Damien Woody, hoping to avoid eating up his career, enrolled this offseason in the much-ballyhooed Duke weight-loss program. Foster, with 45 starts in Denver the last three seasons, and often-injured Rex Tucker will play right tackle. Eight-year veteran Edwin Mulitalo, an anchor of the Baltimore line that opened holes during Jamal Lewis' 2000-yard season, is at left guard. Versatile Barry Stokes adds solid depth. Martz loves veteran linemen who can quickly grasp his complex schemes. He's got plenty.

Defensive Linemen Nobody questions the enormous talent of Shaun Rogers. Apparently, his attitude has also been adjusted after a dreadful '06 that included a league-imposed, four-game suspension for violating the NFL drug policy, plus the ensuing, season-ending knee surgery. Rogers' 10-game absence necessitated moving defensive end Cory Redding inside, where he blossomed and will remain, now alongside Rogers. But perhaps the team's most pressing need in recent seasons has been pressuring opposing quarterbacks from the edge. Through free agency, the Lions acquired defensive end Dewayne White, one of Marinelli's pupils in Tampa Bay during a 10-year stint as the Bucs' defensive line coach. Marinelli believes White is ready to erupt in his fifth season. Marinelli also turned his offseason focus on Kalimba Edwards, who has never come close to fulfilling his athletic potential. Much of the Lions' success in 2007 may depend on how White and Edwards pressure quarterbacks from the edge. Shaun Cody, a starter last season before getting hurt, is in the mix at tackle, and veteran Jared DeVries will be among those platooning at end.

Linebackers Other than Ernie Sims at the weak side, the linebacking corps is an odd, yet interesting mix. Too often, potential has taken a backseat to prolonged injuries. Paris Lenon and Teddy Lehman are in the middle. Boss Bailey is at strong side, where he has playmaking capabilities. Alex Lewis will also rotate in and could start. If all stay healthy, there's enough talent for Detroit to have a solid linebacker corps. But just keeping three of the five functioning at the same time has not been easy so far.

Defensive Backs Bly is in Denver, and free safety Terrence Holt bolted to Arizona in free agency. But second-year safety Daniel Bullocks should step in for Holt. Hitter Kenoy Kennedy is at strong safety. Stanley Wilson played well at the corner late last season. Travis Fisher was brought in from St. Louis as, at least, the nickel back. That leaves eight-year vet Fernando Bryant to avoid the serious injuries that have ruined his stay in Detroit thus far. The organization added to the unit in the draft — second-round safety Gerald Alexander of Boise State and fourth-round corner A.J. Davis of NC State — but this is a thin, raw group of defensive backs that needs to stay healthy.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Jon Kitna, QB
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Calvin Johnson, WR
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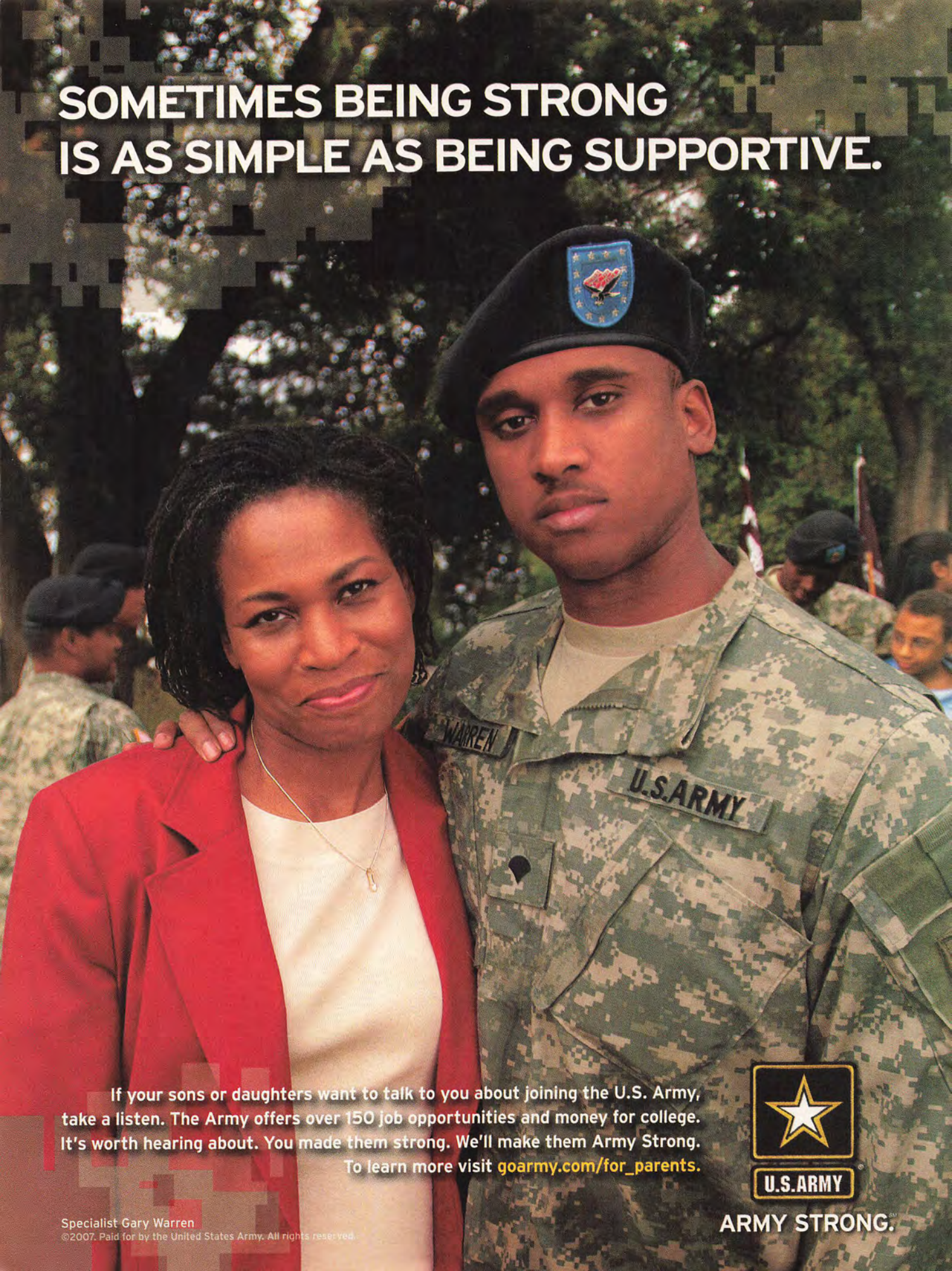
Specialists There truly will come a day when Jason Hanson can't kick anymore. But the Lions expect the 15-year veteran to still have plenty of leg this season. Nick Harris is an able punter who can be phenomenal at dropping kicks inside the 10-yard line. Kick returner Eddie Drummond went from a sensational Pro Bowl season in '05 to a lackluster '06 and needs to rebound with another highlight-filled season.

Coaching Staff Marinelli never lost the respect of his players despite a 3–13 record in his first season as a head coach on any level. Martz's return is a boon. Defensive coordinator Donnie Henderson, a long-time Marinelli pal, was fired and replaced by Joe Barry, the Tampa Bay linebackers coach whom Marinelli wanted to bring in a year earlier. Marinelli and Barry, who happens to be the head coach's son-in-law, should be in far greater harmony — both are huge disciples of the Tampa 2 defense, down to its finest details.

Sims: Steve Moore; Kitna: Peter Brouillet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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
8	Kitna, Jon	QB	6'2"	220	11	Central Washington	FA-Cin-06
6	Orlovsky, Dan	QB	6'5"	230	2	Connecticut	D5-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
28	Bell, Tatum	RB	5'11"	213	3	Oklahoma State	T-Den-07
24	Bryson, Shawn	RB	6'1"	230	8	Tennessee	FA-Buf-03
29	Calhoun, Brian	RB	5'10"	208	1	Wisconsin	D3-06
47	Carthon, Ran	RB	6'0"	218	3	Florida	FA-06
36	Cason, Aveion	RB	5'10"	204	5	Illinois State	FA-06
36	Duckett, T.J.	RB	6'0"	254	5	Michigan State	FA-Was-07
34	Jones, Kevin	RB	6'0"	228	3	Virginia Tech	D1b-04
49	McHugh, Sean	FB	6'5"	265	1	Penn State	FA-05
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
	Beverly, Eric	TE	6'3"	300	10	Miami (Ohio)	FA-Atl-07
89	Campbell, Dan	TE	6'5"	265	7	Texas A&M	FA-Dal-06
18	Drummond, Eddie	WR	5'9"	190	5	Penn State	FA-02
80	Ellis, Devale	WR	5'10"	174	1	Hofstra	FA-06
82	FitzSimmons, Casey	TE	6'4"	258	4	Carroll College	FA-03
87	Furrey, Mike	WR	6'0"	195	4	Northern Iowa	FA-StL-06
84	McDonald, Shaun	WR	5'10"	183	4	Arizona State	FA-StL-07
11	Williams, Roy	WR	6'3"	211	3	Texas	D1a-04
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
76	Backus, Jeff	T	6'5"	305	6	Michigan	D1-01
61	Davis, Frank	G	6'3"	325	1	South Florida	FA-06
72	Foster, George	T	6'5"	338	4	Georgia	T-Den-07
69	Hopson, Tyrone	G	6'2"	300	5	Eastern Kentucky	FA-06
64	Mulitalo, Edwin	G	6'3"	350	8	Arizona	FA-Bal-07
63	Noll, Ben	G	6'4"	315	3	Pennsylvania	FA-04
60	Pearson, Dave	C	6'3"	287	1	Michigan	FA-05
66	Peterman, Stephen	G	6'4"	323	2	LSU	FA-06
51	Raiola, Dominic	C	6'1"	295	6	Nebraska	D2a-01
67	Saipaia, Blaine	G/T	6'3"	315	3	Colorado State	FA-06
72	Scott, Jonathan	T	6'6"	318	1	Texas	D5-06
77	Stickdorn, Clint	T	6'5"	307	1	Cincinnati	FA-05
68	Stokes, Barry	G	6'4"	310	7	Eastern Michigan	FA-Atl-06
74	Tucker, Rex	T	6'5"	315	8	Texas A&M	FA-StL-06
65	Woody, Damien	G	6'3"	340	8	Boston College	FA-NE-04
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
71	Bryant, Anthony	DT	6'3"	337	2	Alabama	PS-TB-06
75	Cody, Shaun	DT	6'4"	310	2	USC	D2-05
95	DeVries, Jared	DE	6'4"	275	8	Iowa	D3-99
98	Edwards, Kalimba	DE	6'6"	265	5	South Carolina	D2-02
70	Harriott, Claude	DE	6'3"	260	1	Pittsburgh	FA-06
79	Moore, Langston	DT	6'1"	305	4	South Carolina	FA-06
62	Pinkney, Cleveland	DT	6'1"	300	3	South Carolina	FA-06
78	Redding, Cory	DT	6'4"	295	4	Texas	D3-03
92	Rogers, Shaun	DT	6'4"	340	6	Texas	D2b-01
93	Smith, Corey	DE	6'2"	250	5	NC State	FA-06
90	Swancutt, Bill	DE	6'4"	265	2	Oregon State	D6a-05
91	White, Dewayne	DE	6'2"	273	4	Louisville	FA-TB-07
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Bailey, Boss	LB	6'3"	235	4	Georgia	D2-03
99	Cannon, Anthony	LB	6'0"	228	1	Tulane	D7b-06
55	Curry, Donté	LB	6'1"	240	6	Morris Brown	W-Was-02
54	Lehman, Teddy	LB	6'1"	238	3	Oklahoma	D2-04
53	Lenon, Paris	LB	6'2"	235	6	Richmond	FA-GB-06
59	Lewis, Alex	LB	6'0"	230	3	Wisconsin	D5-04
50	Sims, Ernie	LB	6'0"	225	1	Florida State	D1-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
25	Bryant, Fernando	CB	5'11"	184	8	Alabama	FA-Jac-04
27	Bullocks, Daniel	S	6'0"	212	1	Nebraska	D2-06
46	Demps, Marcus	S	6'0"	198	1	San Diego State	FA-06
22	Fisher, Travis	CB	5'10"	189	5	UCF	FA-StL-07
26	Kennedy, Kenoy	S	6'1"	215	7	Arkansas	FA-Den-05
45	McCann, Dee	CB	5'10"	200	1	West Virginia	D6-06
38	McGraw, Jon	S	6'3"	206	5	Kansas State	T-NYJ-05
35	Pruitt, Etric	DB	6'0"	318	3	Southern Miss	FA-06
23	Smith, Keith	CB	5'11"	191	3	McNeese State	D3-04
31	Wilson, Stanley	CB	5'11"	189	2	Stanford	D3-05
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
4	Hanson, Jason	K	6'0"	190	15	Washington State	D2b-92
2	Harris, Nick	P	6'2"	218	6	California	W-Cin-03
48	Muhlbach, Don	LS	6'4"	265	3	Texas A&M	FA-04

Head Coach: Rod Marinelli (3–13, 0–0 Playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Martz
Defensive Coordinator: Joe Barry

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	11	Roy Williams
WR	**81**	**Calvin Johnson**
LT	76	Jeff Backus
LG	**64**	**Edwin Mulitalo**
C	51	Dominic Raiola
RG	65	Damien Woody
RT	**72**	**George Foster**
TE	89	Dan Campbell
QB	8	Jon Kitna
FB	24	Shawn Bryson
RB	**28**	**Tatum Bell**

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	**91**	**Dewayne White**
DT	92	Shaun Rogers
DT	78	Cory Redding
DE	98	Kalimba Edwards
LB	50	Ernie Sims
LB	53	Paris Lenon
LB	97	Boss Bailey
CB	25	Fernando Bryant
CB	31	Stanley Wilson
S	26	Kenoy Kennedy
S	27	Daniel Bullocks

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	4	Jason Hanson
P	2	Nick Harris

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	6	Dan Orlovsky
RB	34	Kevin Jones
WR	87	Mike Furrey
LB	59	Alex Lewis
CB	**21**	**Travis Fisher**

New acquisitions in **bold**

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OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions		Key Losses	
RB	Tatum Bell (Den)	CB	Dre' Bly (Den)
CB	Travis Fisher (StL)	DE	James Hall (StL)
T	George Foster (Den)	FS	Terrence Holt (Ari)
WR	Shaun McDonald (StL)	QB	Josh McCown (Oak)
G	Edwin Mulitalo (Bal)	FB	Cory Schlesinger (Mia)
DE	Dewayne White (TB)	WR	Mike Williams (Oak)

2007 Draft

1.	Calvin Johnson	WR	6'4"	237	Georgia Tech
2.	Drew Stanton	QB	6'3"	235	Michigan State
2.	Ikaika Alama-Francis	DE	6'5"	250	Hawaii
2.	Gerald Alexander	FS	6'0"	210	Boise State
4.	A.J. Davis	CB	5'10"	192	NC State
4.	Manuel Ramirez	G	6'3"	335	Texas Tech
5.	Johnny Baldwin	OLB	6'1"	232	Alabama A&M
7.	Ramzee Robinson	CB	5'9"	182	Alabama

In his first season at the helm, coach Rod Marinelli made a huge production of his players being allowed to select five permanent team captains. But immediately following the season, Marinelli dramatically altered the defensive mindset. He fired coordinator Donnie Henderson and encouraged both defensive captains, Bly and Hall, to find work elsewhere. Holt, a free safety, also departed in free agency; young Daniel Bullocks is expected to step in. Schlesinger, an aging fullback, was another veteran allowed to leave, while McCown, the backup quarterback, and the disappointing and moody Williams were dealt to Oakland on draft day for a fourth-round pick that brought NC State cornerback Davis.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Jon Kitna	596	372	4,208	21	22
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Kevin Jones	181	689	3.8	6	
Arlen Harris*	49	158	3.2	1	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Mike Furrey	98	1,086	11.1	6	
Roy Williams	82	1,310	16.0	7	
Kevin Jones	61	520	8.5	2	
Dan Campbell	21	308	14.7	4	

Kicking: Jason Hanson, 29-33 FGs, 30-30 XPs, 117 points
Tackles: Ernie Sims, 124; Terrence Holt,* 76
Sacks: Cory Redding, 8
Interceptions: Three players tied with 3
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (3–13)

Sept.	10	Seattle	L	6– 9
Sept.	17	at Chicago	L	7–34
Sept.	24	Green Bay	L	24–31
Oct.	1	at St. Louis	L	34–41
Oct.	8	at Minnesota	L	17–26
Oct.	15	Buffalo	W	20–17
Oct.	22	at N.Y. Jets	L	24–31
Nov.	5	Atlanta	W	30–14
Nov.	12	San Francisco	L	13–19
Nov.	19	at Arizona	L	10–17
Nov.	23	Miami	L	10–27
Dec.	3	at New England	L	21–28
Dec.	10	Minnesota	L	20–30
Dec.	17	at Green Bay	L	9–17
Dec.	24	Chicago	L	21–26
Dec.	31	at Dallas	W	39–31

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	309.3	22	-12.8
Rushing	70.6	32	-46.7
Passing	238.8	7	+34.0
Scoring	19.1	21	-1.6
Punt Returns	11.3	4	+2.6
Kick Returns	22.3	20	-0.2
Red Zone TD %	40.0	30	-10.8
Defense			
Total Defense	345.6	28	+23.5
Against Rush	125.6	21	+8.3
Against Pass	220.0	25	+15.2
Points Allowed	24.9	30	+4.2
Interceptions	12	25T	-4.3
Sacks	30	25T	-6.3
Turnover Diff.	-9	29	-

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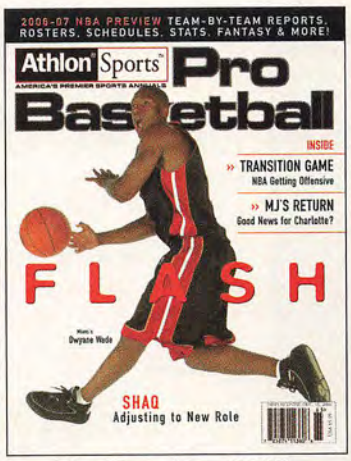

September 2007

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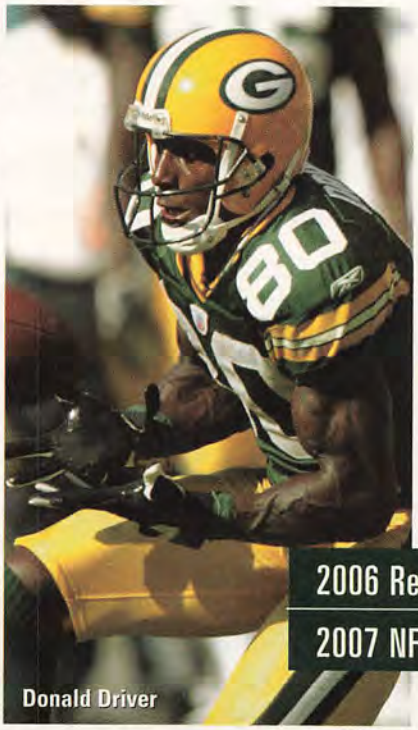
PACKERS

Green Bay Packer fans are familiar with forest green and Forrest Gregg, but the 2007 Packers might have more in common with another Forrest — Gump. Like his box of chocolates, you don't really know what to expect. This is a team that started 1–4 and finished 4–0. This is a team that ranked dead last in total defense midway through the season but closed out strong to finish 12th. This is a team that lost its star running back, already lacked weapons at wide receiver and tight end and yet made no significant pick-ups during the offseason. What's a 38-year old quarterback to make of all this? Early in his career, Brett Favre had a lot of fun as the young gunslinger surrounded by veterans such as Reggie White, Sean Jones, and Keith Jackson. Now, as he takes another step closer to Canton, can Favre come full-circle and end his career with one final playoff run, the old gunslinger reliving his youth, surrounded by a bunch of kids?

Quarterbacks Though it did not look likely when he shed tears on Soldier Field following last season's finale, Favre is back for his 17th season in a Packer uniform (surpassing Bart Starr for longest Packer tenure), extending his record streak of 237 consecutive starts and needing only six touchdown passes to tie Dan Marino for the all-time NFL record of 420. Favre's aging, sure, but his numbers aren't necessarily declining across the board. He's led the NFL and set career-highs in pass attempts each of the last two seasons and cut down on his interceptions from a league-high 29 in 2005 to 18 last year. Still, his passer rating of 72.7 ranked only 25th in the league, and his 18 touchdown passes were the fewest since 1993. Aaron Rodgers, meanwhile, sits and waits another year, yet to demonstrate any promise as a future NFL starter.

Running Backs Fixtures in the Packer backfield almost as familiar as Favre, Ahman Green and William Henderson are both gone. That leaves a young group of backs competing for starting jobs, including Vernand Morency, Noah Herron and Brandon Jackson at halfback and Brandon Miree and rookie Korey Hall at fullback. "If one individual can carry the load … then we'll go that way," says coach Mike McCarthy. "If not, we'll play situations, back-by-committee." Morency turned some heads with his quickness subbing for Green last year (421 yards on 91 carries after being acquired from Houston).

Receivers Donald Driver is back as the only proven commodity among Packer receivers, disappointing news to Packer fans who hoped for a counterpart in the form of a trade for Randy Moss or a first-round draft pick. That said, don't sell Driver short — he earned his second Pro Bowl berth last year after ranking fifth in the NFL (and setting career-bests) in receptions (92) and yards (1,295) while becoming only the third Packer receiver ever with three consecutive 1,000-yard seasons. Greg Jennings appeared to be on the verge of a stand-out rookie campaign after an impressive training camp and start to the season (eight catches of 20 yards or more through five games), but an ankle injury in Week 6 slowed him down the rest of the way. Injury-prone veteran Robert Ferguson and draft picks James Jones and David Clowney will compete for the third-receiver spot. At tight end, Bubba Franks must bounce back from the worst season of his career — he had far too many drops and penalties and didn't catch a single touchdown pass.


Donald Driver

Offensive Linemen The Packers gambled by starting three rookie offensive linemen for much of last season and hope to reap the rewards this year and for years to come. Still, the class of this bunch are veteran

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE PACKERS

Brett Favre is back for a 17th season in Green Bay, and other than backfield mates Ahman Green and William Henderson, so is every other key member of last year's team that won its final four games to finish 8–8 and just missed the playoffs in the weak NFC. That's the good news. What could be the bad news is that the Packers made no significant free agent signings and used their draft picks on an unspectacular assortment of injury-prone or relatively unknown prospects. Second-year coach Mike McCarthy earned positive reviews last season both for his handling of the aging Favre and a host of young players, and the Packers head into 2007 with the same unusual approach — looking for rejuvenated play from a quarterback who turns 38 in October and maturation from most of the rest of the team, which was the league's youngest last year. Keys to watch for this year — whether the defense more closely resembles the unit that finished the season ranked 12th in total yards allowed or the one that through the first seven weeks was dead last in the NFL, and whether Greg Jennings at wide receiver and Vernand Morency, Noah Herron, or Brandon Jackson at running back can provide Favre with enough potent offensive weapons to complement the steady Donald Driver. If all goes according to plan, a final playoff run could be Favre's going-away present.

2006 Record: 8–8

2007 NFC North Prediction: 2nd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	San Diego	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at Minnesota	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	Chicago	8:15 pm
Oct.	14	Washington	1:00 pm
Week	7	BYE	
Oct.	29	at Denver	8:30 pm
Nov.	4	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	Minnesota	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	Carolina	1:00 pm
Nov.	22	at Detroit	12:30 pm
Nov.	29	at Dallas	8:15 pm
Dec.	9	Oakland	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	at St. Louis	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at Chicago	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	Detroit	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Driver: Larry Kinker
Favre: David Stoltz/Getty Images

Packers QB

Brett Favre

A.J. Hawk

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Division leaders Green Bay emerged from the Black and Blue division virtually unscathed. After being shut out by the Bears in the season opener, the Packers won their five remaining division games, including three straight to end the season. Green Bay's 5–1 NFC North record was tied for the best division mark in the NFL.

What about Bob? When Bob Harlan retired as Packers Chairman & CEO in May, it marked the end of an historic era in this storied franchise's history. Harlan joined the Packers in 1971, was elected president in 1989 and set the Packers on a course that would lead to 13 consecutive .500-or-better seasons from 1992-2004.

Defense improves After Week 7, the Packer defense ranked last in the NFL, but coordinator Bob Sanders' unit steadily improved the rest of the way, finishing the season 12th in total yards allowed.

Sack attack The Packers' defense tallied 46 sacks while the offense gave up only 24, for a sack ratio of plus-22, third-best in the NFL (and the only non-playoff team to crack the top eight). Aaron Kampman ranked second in the league with 15.5 sacks, while Corey Williams became the first Packer defensive tackle ever to record three sacks in one game.

tackles Chad Clifton and Mark Tauscher and center Scott Wells. Between them, Clifton and Tauscher allowed only three sacks last year and have surrendered only 27 between them in a combined 14 NFL seasons. Among last year's rookies, Daryn Colledge started 14 games at left guard and earned McCarthy's nod as the team's most improved player over the course of the season. Jason Spitz has locked down a starting job at right guard, and Tony Moll can fill in at any of the tackle or guard positions.

Defensive Linemen How many 6'4", 278-pounders ever slipped past the KGB? That's what's happened in Green Bay, as Aaron Kampman has emerged as the Packers' top pass rusher, eclipsing the more heralded Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila. Playing virtually every snap of the season, Kampman ranked second in the NFL with 15.5 sacks and led all linemen in the league with 89 total tackles. To be more accurate, it was 6'3", 290-pound Cullen Jenkins who foiled KGB, taking over the starting spot at right end from Gbaja-Biamila in Week 13. On the inside, run-stuffer Ryan Pickett and pass-rusher Corey Williams are both coming off surprisingly productive seasons and will be joined by first-round pick Justin Harrell, giving the Packers their deepest D-line in years.

Linebackers The Packers' linebacking corps has a lot in common — young, aggressive, athletic, good tacklers with room for improvement in pass coverage. Fifth-year middle linebacker Nick Barnett is the veteran of the group and is coming off his best season as a pro. Barnett dramatically reduced his missed tackles but allows too many big plays as a pass defender. A.J. Hawk, the No. 5 overall selection in the 2006 draft, finished third in the voting for AP Defensive Rookie of the Year honors, leading the team in tackles (119) and showing a knack for big plays. Brady Poppinga rebounded from knee surgery and impressed with his toughness — after another offseason to recover from the surgery, he should show even more athleticism this year.

Defensive Backs Viewed by many as a risky pick-up prior to last season, Charles Woodson proved his doubters wrong, especially over the second half of the year. Woodson intercepted a career-high and NFC-leading eight passes, including six in the season's final six weeks. At the other corner, the Packers have another proven veteran in Al Harris, known as one of the league's most physical corners but lacking the playmaking skills of Woodson. At the safety spots, Marquand Manuel must overcome a disappointing season in which he led the team in missed tackles (15) and allowed the most touchdowns by a Packer safety in more than a decade. Nick Collins gained confidence toward the end of last season and must carry that attitude over to 2007.

Specialists The Packers have decent but not exceptional specialists in kicker Dave Rayner and punter Jon Ryan. Rayner ranked 26th in the league in field goal accuracy (74.3 percent), but his strong leg on kickoffs was a vast improvement over former kicker Ryan Longwell. Mason Crosby, a sixth-round pick from Colorado also known more for distance than accuracy, will have a chance to win the job. Ryan had a gross punting average of 44.5 yards, but his net of 35.7 was only 26th in the league. Woodson is a more than adequate punt returner, and it remains to be seen whether Morency will retain kick-return duties or hand the job over to one of the rookies.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Donald Driver, WR
Brett Favre's primary target should be good for eight to 10 scores and at least 1,200 yards.

Vernand Morency, RB
Well-versed in Green Bay's zone blocking scheme and expected to hold off rookie Brandon Jackson.

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Coaching Staff McCarthy came to Green Bay with no head coaching experience and with plenty of doubters, but as a first-year coach he engineered one of the biggest turnarounds in team history as the Pack, the youngest team in the NFL, finished at 8–8 and within a tie-breaker of the playoffs after a 4–12 season in 2005. Green Bay made significant improvement in penalties and turnover margin and gained confidence as the season progressed. Defensive coordinator Bob Sanders' unit made giant strides late in the season after a shaky start, and hopes are that the trend will continue. On offense, Joe Philbin has been promoted to offensive coordinator after Jeff Jagodzinski left to become head coach at Boston College. Philbin, last year's offensive line coach, plans to continue the zone-blocking system Jagodzinski put in place, which yielded mixed results with three rookie starters on the line a year ago.

Hawk, Morency: Larry Kinker

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
8	Bouman, Todd	QB	6'2"	226	9	St. Cloud	FA-06
4	Favre, Brett	QB	6'2"	222	16	Southern Miss	T-Atl-92
7	Martin, Ingle	QB	6'2"	220	1	Furman	D5a-06
12	Rodgers, Aaron	QB	6'2"	223	2	California	D1-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
23	Herron, Noah	RB	5'11"	224	2	Northwestern	FA-05
40	Miree, Brandon	FB	6'0"	236	2	Pittsburgh	FA-06
34	Morency, Vernand	RB	5'10"	212	2	Oklahoma State	T-Hou-06
28	Pope, P.J.	RB	5'9"	218	1	Bowling Green	FA-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
49	Alcorn, Zac	TE	6'4"	260	1	Black Hills State	FA-06
19	Bodiford, Shaun	WR	5'11"	186	1	Portland State	W-Det-06
13	Brewster, Carlton	WR	5'11"	214	1	Ferris State	FA-06
80	Driver, Donald	WR	6'0"	190	8	Alcorn State	D7b-99
89	Ferguson, Robert	WR	6'1"	210	6	Texas A&M	D2-01
83	Francies, Chris	WR	6'1"	193	1	UTEP	FA-06
88	Franks, Bubba	TE	6'6"	265	7	Miami	D1-00
18	Holiday, Carlyle	WR	6'2"	217	1	Notre Dame	W-Ari-06
84	Humphrey, Tory	TE	6'2"	257	1	Central Michigan	FA-05
85	Jennings, Greg	WR	5'11"	197	1	Western Michigan	D2b-06
86	Lee, Donald	TE	6'4"	248	4	Mississippi State	FA-05
82	Martin, Ruvell	WR	6'4"	217	1	Saginaw Valley State	FA-06
17	Russell, Calvin	WR	6'0"	190	1	Tuskegee	FA-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
76	Clifton, Chad	T	6'5"	330	7	Tennessee	D2-00
73	Colledge, Daryn	G/T	6'4"	299	1	Boise State	D2a-06
62	Coston, Junius	G/T	6'3"	317	2	North Carolina A&T	D5a-05
61	Leffew, Travis	G/T	6'4"	292	1	Louisville	FA-06
75	Moll, Tony	G/T	6'5"	308	1	Nevada	D5b-06
64	Palmer, Tony	G	6'2"	326	1	Missouri	W-StL-06
72	Spitz, Jason	G/C	6'4"	313	1	Louisville	D3b-06
68	Stenavich, Adam	G	6'4"	308	1	Michigan	FA-06
65	Tauscher, Mark	T	6'4"	315	7	Wisconsin	D7a-00
69	Thompson, Orrin	T	6'6"	322	1	Duke	FA-06
70	Walter, Tyson	G/T	6'4"	300	5	Ohio State	FA-06
63	Wells, Scott	C	6'2"	304	3	Tennessee	D7-04
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Allen, Kenderick	DT	6'5"	328	4	LSU	FA-06
90	Cole, Colin	DT	6'2"	325	2	Iowa	FA-04
94	Gbaja-Biamila, Kabeer	DE	6'4"	250	7	San Diego State	D5a-00
77	Jenkins, Cullen	DE	6'3"	290	3	Central Michigan	FA-04
93	Jolly, Johnny	DT	6'3"	317	1	Texas A&M	D6a-06
74	Kampman, Aaron	DE	6'4"	278	5	Iowa	D5a-02
96	Montgomery, Michael	DE	6'5"	275	2	Texas A&M	D6a-05
79	Pickett, Ryan	DT	6'2"	322	6	Ohio State	FA-StL-06
99	Williams, Corey	DT	6'4"	313	3	Arkansas State	D6-04
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
56	Barnett, Nick	LB	6'2"	232	4	Oregon State	D1-03
53	Havner, Spencer	LB	6'3"	245	1	UCLA	FA-06
50	Hawk, A.J.	LB	6'1"	246	1	Ohio State	D1-06
55	Hodge, Abdul	LB	6'0"	236	1	Iowa	D3a-06
57	Hunter, Jason	LB/DE	6'4"	255	1	Appalachian State	FA-06
51	Poppinga, Brady	LB	6'3"	245	2	BYU	D4b-05
58	Taylor, Ben	LB	6'2"	238	5	Virginia Tech	FA-Cle-06
59	White, Tracy	LB	6'0"	236	4	Howard	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
20	Bigby, Atari	S	5'11"	211	1	UCF	FA-06
27	Blackmon, Will	CB	6'0"	198	1	Boston College	D4b-06
24	Bush, Jarrett	CB	6'0"	194	1	Utah State	W-Car-06
36	Collins, Nick	S	5'11"	200	2	Bethune-Cookman	D2a-05
29	Culver, Tyrone	S	6'1"	200	1	Fresno State	D6b-06
43	Dendy, Patrick	CB	6'0"	190	2	Rice	FA-05
31	Harris, Al	CB	6'1"	185	9	Texas A&M-King.	T-Phi-03
22	Manuel, Marquand	S	6'0"	209	5	Florida	FA-Sea-06
47	Nnabuife, Alvin	CB	6'0"	210	1	SMU	FA-06
26	Peprah, Charlie	S	5'11"	202	1	Alabama	W-NYG-06
41	Walker, Frank	CB	5'10"	197	4	Tuskegee	FA-NYG-07
38	Williams, Tramon	CB	5'11"	182	1	Louisiana Tech	FA-06
21	Woodson, Charles	CB	6'1"	208	9	Michigan	FA-Oak-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
60	Davis, Rob	LS	6'3"	284	11	Shippensburg	FA-97
16	Rayner, Dave	K	6'2"	210	2	Michigan State	W-Ind-06
9	Ryan, Jon	P	6'0"	202	1	Regina	FA-06

Head Coach: Mike McCarthy (8–8, 0–0 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Joe Philbin
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Sanders

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	80	Donald Driver
WR	85	Greg Jennings
T	76	Chad Clifton
G	73	Daryn Colledge
C	63	Scott Wells
G	72	Jason Spitz
T	65	Mark Tauscher
TE	88	Bubba Franks
QB	4	Brett Favre
RB	34	Vernand Morency
FB	40	Brandon Miree

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	74	Aaron Kampman
DT	79	Ryan Pickett
DT	99	Corey Williams
DE	77	Cullen Jenkins
LB	51	Brady Poppinga
LB	56	Nick Barnett
LB	50	A.J. Hawk
CB	21	Charles Woodson
CB	31	Al Harris
FS	36	Nick Collins
SS	22	Marquand Manuel

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	16	Dave Rayner
P	9	Jon Ryan

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	12	Aaron Rodgers
WR	89	Robert Ferguson
RB	**32**	**Brandon Jackson**
DT	**91**	**Justin Harrell**
DE	94	Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Lambeau Field (72,601)
Surface: Grass
www.packers.com
Ticket Info: 920-438-1640
Training Camp: St. Norbert College, (DePere, Wisc.)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

CB Frank Walker (NYG)

Key Losses

RB Ahman Green (Hou)
FB William Henderson (FA)
TE David Martin (Mia)

2007 Draft

1.	Justin Harrell	DT	6'4"	305	Tennessee
2.	Brandon Jackson	RB	5'10"	210	Nebraska
3.	James Jones	WR	6'1"	207	San Jose State
3.	Aaron Rouse	SS	6'4"	225	Virginia Tech
4.	Allen Barbre	T	6'4"	300	Missouri Southern
5.	David Clowney	WR	6'0"	184	Virginia Tech
6.	Korey Hall	ILB	6'0"	236	Boise State
6.	Desmond Bishop	ILB	6'2"	239	California
6.	Mason Crosby	K	6'1"	214	Colorado
7.	DeShawn Wynn	RB	5'10"	238	Florida
7.	Clark Harris	TE	6'5"	261	Rutgers

The Packers didn't impress the so-called draft experts with their 2007 selections and made only one free agent acquisition, picking up Walker, a reserve cornerback from the Giants. The story of this offseason is the departure of both starting running backs — long-time ball-carrier Green and even longer-time fullback Henderson — and the re-signing of virtually every other Packer free agent. After last season's strong finish, many Packer fans believed the team only needed to add a few weapons for Brett Favre to play with in order to make a postseason run this year. How the Packers make up for the loss of Green and whether Jones and/or Clowney emerge as legitimate threats will go a long way toward determining the Packers' fate and Favre's happiness in what is probably his last season (heard that before?).

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Brett Favre	613	343	3,885	18	18
Aaron Rodgers	15	6	46	0	0
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Ahman Green*	266	1,059	4.0		5
Vernand Morency	91	421	4.6		2
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Donald Driver	92	1,295	14.1		8
Ahman Green*	46	373	8.1		1
Greg Jennings	45	632	14.0		3

Kicking: Dave Rayner, 26-35 FGs, 31-32 XPs, 109 points
Tackles: A.J. Hawk, 119; Nick Barnett, 105
Sacks: Aaron Kampman, 15.5
Interceptions: Charles Woodson, 8
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	10	Chicago	L	0–26
Sept.	17	New Orleans	L	27–34
Sept.	24	at Detroit	W	31–24
Oct.	2	at Philadelphia	L	9–31
Oct.	8	St. Louis	L	20–23
Oct.	22	at Miami	W	34–24
Oct.	29	Arizona	W	31–14
Nov.	5	at Buffalo	L	10–24
Nov.	12	at Minnesota	W	23–17
Nov.	19	New England	L	0–35
Nov.	27	at Seattle	L	24–34
Dec.	3	N.Y. Jets	L	10–38
Dec.	10	at San Francisco	W	30–19
Dec.	17	Detroit	W	17– 9
Dec.	21	Minnesota	W	9– 7
Dec.	31	at Chicago	W	26– 7

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	341.1	9	+19.0
Rushing	103.9	23	-13.4
Passing	237.2	8	+32.4
Scoring	18.8	22	-1.9
Punt Returns	7.8	24	-0.9
Kick Returns	19.7	31	-2.8
Red Zone TD %	32.7	31	-18.1
Defense			
Total Defense	320.9	12	-1.2
Against Rush	114.1	13	-3.2
Against Pass	206.8	17	+2.0
Points Allowed	22.9	25T	+2.2
Interceptions	23	3	+6.7
Sacks	46	4	+9.7
Turnover Diff.	0	17T	-

VIKINGS

Patience will be a key word this season for fans of the Minnesota Vikings, who launched a rebuilding program last winter that even owner Zygi Wilf acknowledges might be a slow process.

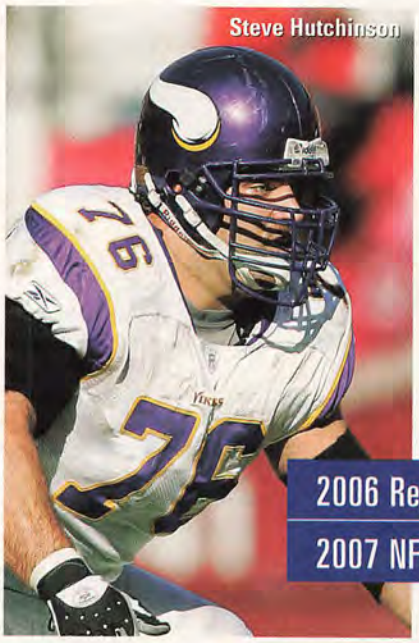
After all, the Vikings will debut a new quarterback in 2007, expected to be the raw but physically gifted Tarvaris Jackson. Most of their offensive skill positions have been overhauled, a project aimed at elevating the octane level of their otherwise weak attack last season. Meanwhile, their defense is adjusting to its seventh defensive coordinator in nine years. Leslie Frazier has replaced Mike Tomlin, hired in the offseason as Pittsburgh's defensive coordinator.

How will these changes impact a team that lost eight of its final 10 games to finish 6–10 last season? Sometimes, it seems, you have to take a step back in order to move forward.

Quarterbacks Jackson looked overmatched in two starts as a rookie last season, but he is the most likely candidate to succeed Brad Johnson, who was released. The Vikings love Jackson's physical skills, most notably his effortless but powerful throwing motion, and they believe he will benefit from a full offseason in their program. Jackson has decent mobility, but he will have to play within the disciplined West Coast scheme employed by coach Brad Childress. One thing the Vikings know for sure: Jackson can make every throw required in their offense. They demonstrated their confidence in Jackson by declining to pursue a veteran free agent to compete for the job. Instead, they retained little-used Brooks Bollinger, whom Childress claims will have a chance to win the job in training camp.

Running Backs The addition of rookie Adrian Peterson, the team's first-round draft pick, gives the Vikings the type of backfield playmaker they have missed since the retirement of Robert Smith in 2000. Peterson runs with fury and great skill, and the only factor holding him back is his propensity for injury, most recently a fractured collarbone. If healthy, Peterson will form a dynamic 1-2 punch with veteran Chester Taylor, who broke out for 1,216 yards in his first season as a full-time starter in 2006. Taylor, however, slowed notably in December and should benefit from sharing the load with Peterson. Excitement about a Peterson-Taylor combination might diminish the important role expected from Mewelde Moore, a perfect third-down back for a West Coast offense. Fullback Tony Richardson is expected to return in full strength after breaking his arm last season.

Receivers Gone are the days when Cris Carter, Randy Moss and Jake Reed dominated the NFL. The Vikings entered training camp with only one established receiver on their roster, free agent acquisition Bobby Wade. And even Wade can't be counted on as a No. 1 receiver. Instead, the Vikings hope to use him as a slot man who utilizes his abilities to run after the catch on short passes. Who will man the rest of the positions is anybody's guess. Former first-round pick Troy Williamson spent time at a NIKE coordination clinic this offseason, hoping to improve his ability to adjust to deep balls. This season would seem to be Williamson's last chance to prove he can be a reliable threat. Otherwise, the Vikings will hope that either veteran Billy McMullen or some of the three receivers they drafted — Sidney Rice, Aundrae Allison and Chandler Williams — can polish their games quickly and contribute. Rice's 6'4" frame and 39.5-inch vertical leap make him an instant threat in the red zone if he can learn the nuances of getting off the line of scrimmage. Meanwhile, new tight end Visanthe Shiancoe will provide another target in the passing game.


Steve Hutchinson

Offensive Linemen Three of the highest-paid players at their position will have to improve their chemistry in order for this group to take

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE VIKINGS

The Vikings are hoping for incremental progress after going 6–10 in 2006. Coach Brad Childress and personnel director Rick Spielman are taking a long-form approach to rebuilding the franchise, focusing primarily on the draft and staying away from signing mid-career free agents who offer nothing more than a quick fix. The Vikes barely made a splash in the offseason, signing only two new potential starters in receiver Bobby Wade and tight end Visanthe Shiancoe. This lack of activity might not sit well with Vikings fans, who believe their team should be moving faster in this era of NFL parity and quick turnarounds. But it's hard to imagine instant success with a new quarterback in Tarvaris Jackson, an overhauled receiving corps that includes only one established NFL receiver, and a defense that lost coordinator Mike Tomlin to Pittsburgh. Childress has the complete support of owner Zygi Wilf, and it's unlikely that his job is on the line no matter how the Vikings play in 2007. It's a good thing for Childress, because indications are that the team is a year or two away from competing for a deep playoff run. "It will take a couple years," Wilf says, "until we can get into a position for championship-caliber competitiveness. Hopefully we can get there sooner. We can't expect that but we certainly can hope for that."

2006 Record: 6–10

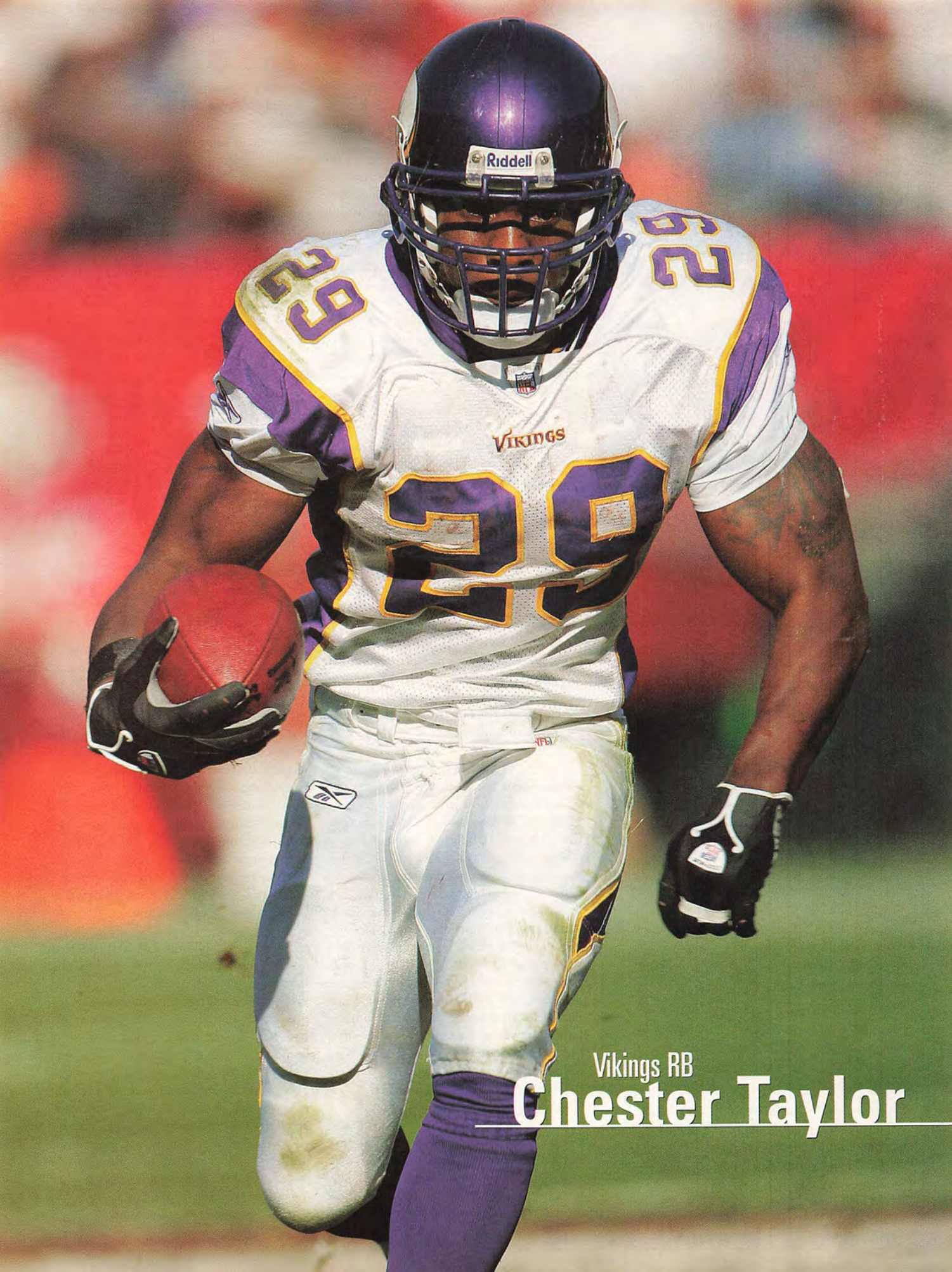
2007 NFC North Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Atlanta	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	at Detroit	4:05 pm
Sept.	23	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	Green Bay	1:00 pm
Week	5	BYE	
Oct.	14	at Chicago	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Dallas	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	San Diego	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	at Green Bay	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	Oakland	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	Detroit	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at San Francisco	4:05 pm
Dec.	17	Chicago	8:30 pm
Dec.	23	Washington	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	at Denver	4:15 pm

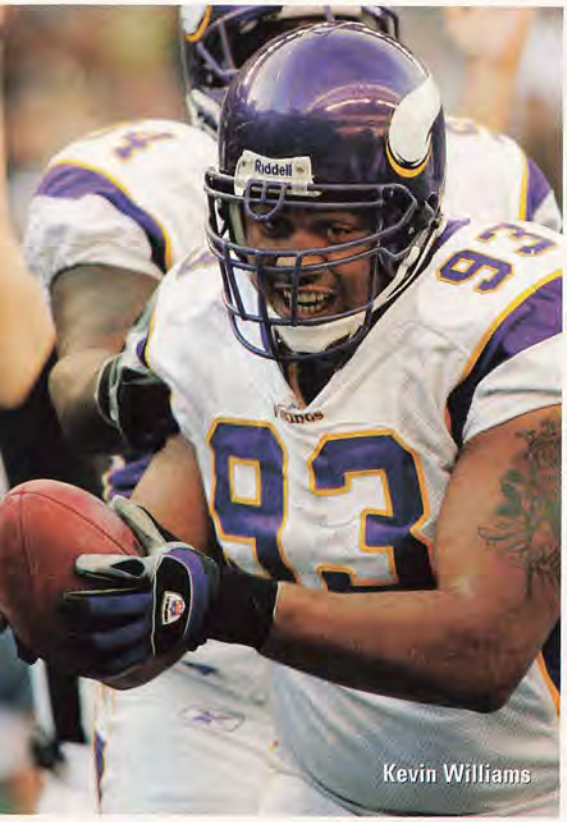
All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Hutchinson: Taylor: Paul Spinelli/ Getty Images



Vikings RB

Chester Taylor


Kevin Williams

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Keeping it simple Even if Brad Childress hands over playcalling duties to offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell, don't expect a huge change in style. Bevell played for Childress at Wisconsin and closely mirrors his philosophy and approach.

Out with the zone The team might re-consider its heavy use of zone blocking among offensive linemen. For the most part, its personnel is more suited to traditional man-to-man blocking techniques.

Block party Rookie defensive end Brian Robison blocked six kicks during his career at Texas. You don't draft players because they can block kicks, but the skill is unique. Robison is excellent at judging the direction and flight of the ball at the line of scrimmage.

Return man? It will be interesting to see if the team uses wide receiver Bobby Wade as a punt returner or kick returner. Wade struggled with muffs and fumbles in that role earlier in his career.

I'll do it myself Cornerback Antoine Winfield did not participate in most of the team's offseason strength and conditioning program. Winfield lived in the Twin Cities but preferred to work out on his own.

a step forward. Left tackle Bryant McKinnie, left guard Steve Hutchinson and center Matt Birk all struggled in different degrees last season to learn the Vikings' zone blocking scheme. Still, Hutchinson and Birk both made the Pro Bowl, and another full offseason together should help the trio once training camp begins. The Vikings have plenty of other questions to answer as well. The departures of veterans Mike Rosenthal and Jason Whittle leave them will no proven depth, nor a proven option should right guard Artis Hicks or right tackle Ryan Cook falter during training camp. Hicks is best used as a utility backup, but he was pressed into full-time duty last season. Cook is a converted center who had never played tackle before moving into that role in the second half of last season.

Defensive Linemen The strength of the team remains its inside duo of defensive tackles, Pat Williams and Kevin Williams. They play the 1-gap run defense to perfection, and no team can move either out of the hole unless they use a double- or triple-team. Kevin Williams also is a strong pass rusher, but Pat Williams is a bit of a liability in obvious passing downs. Both defensive ends, Kenechi Udeze and Darrion Scott are strong against the run. But they need to work on their pass rush; Udeze went sackless in 2006. The big key will be whether Erasmus James can return from a torn ACL quickly and effectively. If James gets back to full strength, he can team with Ray Edwards and possibly rookie Brian Robison to give the Vikings extra pass rush off the bench.

Linebackers The free agent departure of middle linebacker Napoleon Harris forced a lineup shuffle. E.J. Henderson has returned to the middle after two effective seasons on the outside. Henderson struggled as a middle linebacker earlier in his career, but the Vikings are counting on maturity and a better scheme to help ease his transition. The Vikings were willing to make the change because of the impending return of Chad Greenway, last year's first-round draft pick who missed all of 2006 with a torn ACL. Greenway returned to full health during the offseason, and he is expected to slide into Henderson's weak-side position. If healthy, Greenway will add a new level of speed to the team's defense. Ben Leber is a steadying force on the strong side and serves as one of the team's better outside pass rushers.

Defensive Backs Antoine Winfield and Cedric Griffin might be the NFL's most physical cornerback duo. Winfield's size (5'9", 180) always fools receivers into forgetting how hard he hits and how difficult it is to get away from him at the line of scrimmage. Like Winfield, Griffin hits like a safety. Winfield maximizes his coverage skills despite the usual size disadvantage he has against opposing receivers. Griffin, however, is 6'0" and has enough speed to grow into a dominant cover man if he continues making progress. The departure of Fred Smoot leaves the nickel back job open, but it is expected to be filled either by rookie Marcus McCauley or veteran Dovonte Edwards. The Vikings have accumulated good depth at safety, where starters Dwight Smith and Darren Sharper will be pushed by veterans Mike Doss and Tank Williams, who are both attempting to return from serious knee injuries.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Adrian Peterson, RB
Will likely start the season splitting time with Chester Taylor, but don't be surprised if the job becomes Peterson's at some point.
Tarvaris Jackson, QB
Very limited experience but will deliver some value with his running.

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Specialists Ryan Longwell remains one of the NFL's most accurate kickers under 50 yards, and he is as cool as they come under pressure. Longwell's kickoffs were among the league's shortest, but the Vikings worked hard in the offseason to acquire better cover men to balance out the short distance. Punter Chris Kluwe made a decent comeback from a torn ACL, but the Vikings are hoping for more consistency from him as distance grows from the surgery. Rookie free agent Alex Reyes will be given a chance to unseat Kluwe in training camp.

Coaching Staff Childress had a tough first season meshing with the players he inherited, but there is hope that a second year under his leadership will be easier for players who needed time getting used to his style. Childress absorbed a huge loss when Tomlin departed after one season. Frazier is well-respected, but there was no doubt Tomlin was a special coach and had a unique relationship with the team's defensive players. One interesting dynamic will be whether Childress hands off playcalling duties to offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell. Childress has acknowledged the difficulty of making in-game decisions while also calling plays at the same time.

Williams: Scott Cohen/US Presswire; Jackson : Jed Jacobsohn/Getty Images

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
9	Bollinger, Brooks	QB	6'1"	205	4	Wisconsin	T-NYJ-06
2	Henson, Drew	QB	6'4"	235	3	Michigan	FA-06
7	Jackson, Tarvaris	QB	6'2"	232	1	Alabama State	D2c-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
35	Fason, Ciatrick	RB	6'0"	207	2	Florida	D4-05
44	Goodspeed, Joey	FB	6'1"	247	4	Notre Dame	FA-06
34	Mathis, Wendell	RB	5'11"	213	1	Fresno State	FA-06
30	Moore, Mewelde	RB	5'11"	209	3	Tulane	D4b-04
22	Pinner, Artose	RB	5'10"	232	4	Kentucky	W-Det-06
49	Richardson, Tony	FB	6'1"	238	12	Auburn	FA-KC-06
38	Tahi, Naufahu	FB	6'0"	254	1	BYU	PS-Cin-06
29	Taylor, Chester	RB	5'11"	213	5	Toledo	FA-Bal-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
11	Carter, Jason	WR	6'0"	205	1	Texas A&M	FA-06
83	Dugan, Jeff	TE	6'4"	258	3	Maryland	D7-04
40	Kleinsasser, Jim	TE	6'3"	272	8	North Dakota	D2-99
17	Mann, Maurice	WR	6'1"	190	2	Nevada	PS-Sea-06
12	McMullen, Billy	WR	6'4"	215	4	Virginia	T-Phi-06
15	Nance, Martin	WR	6'3"	212	1	Miami (OH)	FA-06
45	Owens, Richard	TE	6'4"	273	3	Louisville	FA-04
81	Shiancoe, Visanthe	TE	6'4"	250	4	Morgan State	FA-NYG-07
19	Wade, Bobby	WR	5'10"	186	4	Arizona	FA-Ten-06
82	Williamson, Troy	WR	6'1"	203	2	South Carolina	D1a-05
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
78	Birk, Matt	C	6'4	309	9	Harvard	D6-98
62	Cook, Ryan	C/T	6'6"	328	1	New Mexico	D2b-06
64	Herrera, Anthony	G	6'2"	315	3	Tennessee	FA-04
79	Hicks, Artis	G	6'4"	335	5	Memphis	T-Phi-06
76	Hutchinson, Steve	G	6'5"	313	6	Michigan	FA-Sea-06
72	Johnson, Marcus	T	6'6"	321	2	Ole Miss	D2-05
66	Katnik, Norm	C	6'4"	280	2	USC	FA-06
73	Martin, Jimmy	G	6'5"	306	1	Virginia Tech	FA-06
74	McKinnie, Bryant	T	6'8"	335	5	Miami	D1-02
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
91	Edwards, Ray	DE	6'5"	268	1	Purdue	D4-06
71	Guerrero, Alex	DT	6'1"	303	1	Boise State	FA-06
99	James, Erasmus	DE	6'4"	266	2	Wisconsin	D1b-05
97	Johnson, Spencer	DT	6'3"	286	3	Auburn	FA-04
92	Mitchell, Jayme	DE	6'6"	285	1	Ole Miss	FA-06
98	Scott, Darrion	DE	6'3"	289	3	Ohio State	D3-04
90	Smith, Khreem	DE	6'4"	270	1	Oklahoma State	FA-06
95	Udeze, Kenechi	DE	6'3"	281	3	USC	D1-04
93	Williams, Kevin	DT	6'5"	311	4	Oklahoma State	D1-03
94	Williams, Pat	DT	6'3"	317	10	Texas A&M	FA-Buf-05
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Ciurciu, Vinny	LB	6'0"	235	4	Boston College	FA-Car-07
59	Farwell, Heath	LB	6'0"	235	2	San Diego State	FA-05
55	Glenn, Jason	LB	6'0"	231	6	Texas A&M	FA-06
52	Greenway, Chad	LB	6'2"	242	1	Iowa	D1-06
56	Henderson, E.J.	LB	6'1"	245	4	Maryland	D2-03
51	Leber, Ben	LB	6'3"	244	5	Kansas State	FA-SD-06
54	Thomas, Dontarrious	LB	6'2"	241	3	Auburn	D2-04
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
20	Blue, Greg	S	6'2"	216	1	Georgia	D5-06
28	Body, Patrick	CB	6'2"	198	2	Toledo	FA-06
21	Doss, Mike	S	5'10"	207	4	Ohio State	FA-Ind-07
36	Edwards, Dovonte	CB	6'0"	182	2	NC State	FA-05
41	Gordon, Charles	CB	5'11"	180	1	Kansas	FA-06
23	Griffin, Cedric	CB	6'0"	203	1	Texas	D2a-06
31	Hunter, Will	S	5'10"	190	2	Syracuse	FA-04
42	Sharper, Darren	S	6'2"	210	10	William & Mary	FA-05
24	Smith, Dwight	S	5'10"	201	6	Akron	FA-06
27	Whitaker, Ronyell	CB	5'9"	196	1	Virginia Tech	FA-06
25	Williams, Tank	S	6'3"	223	5	Stanford	FA-Ten-05
26	Winfield, Antoine	CB	5'9"	180	8	Ohio State	FA-Buf-04
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
5	Kluwe, Chris	P	6'4"	215	2	UCLA	W-Sea-05
46	Loeffler, Cullen	LS	6'5"	241	3	Texas	FA-04
8	Longwell, Ryan	K	6'0"	200	10	California	FA-GB-06

Head Coach: Brad Childress (6–10, 0–0 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Darrell Bevell
Defensive Coordinator: Leslie Frazier

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	**19**	**Bobby Wade**
WR	12	Billy McMullen
LT	74	Bryant McKinnie
LG	76	Steve Hutchinson
C	78	Matt Birk
RG	79	Artis Hicks
RT	62	Ryan Cook
TE	**81**	**Visanthe Shiancoe**
QB	7	Tarvaris Jackson
FB	49	Tony Richardson
RB	29	Chester Taylor

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	95	Kenechi Udeze
DT	94	Pat Williams
DT	93	Kevin Williams
DE	98	Darrion Scott
SLB	51	Ben Leber
MLB	56	E.J. Henderson
WLB	52	Chad Greenway
CB	26	Antoine Winfield
CB	23	Cedric Griffin
SS	42	Darren Sharper
FS	24	Dwight Smith

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	8	Ryan Longwell
P	5	Chris Kluwe

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	9	Brooks Bollinger
RB	**28**	**Adrian Peterson**
WR	82	Troy Williamson
LB	54	Dontarrious Thomas
DB	**31**	**Marcus McCauley**

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Metrodome (64,121)
Surface: Field turf
www.vikings.com
Ticket Info: 612-338-4537
Training Camp: Minnesota State

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

LB	Vinny Ciurciu (Car)
S	Mike Doss (Ind)
TE	Visanthe Shiancoe (NYG)
WR	Bobby Wade (Ten)

Key Losses

LB	Napolean Harris (KC)
QB	Brad Johnson (Dal)
WR	Marcus Robinson (Det)
T	Mike Rosenthal (Mia)
CB	Fred Smoot (Was)
WR	Travis Taylor (FA)
OL	Jason Whittle (Buf)
TE	Jermaine Wiggins (Jac)

2007 Draft

1.	Adrian Peterson	RB	6'2"	218	Oklahoma
2.	Sidney Rice	WR	6'4"	202	South Carolina
3.	Marcus McCauley	CB	6'1"	200	Fresno State
4.	Brian Robison	DE	6'2"	266	Texas
5.	Aundrae Allison	WR	6'0"	202	East Carolina
6.	Rufus Alexander	OLB	6'1"	227	Oklahoma
7.	Tyler Thigpen	QB	6'2"	223	Coastal Carolina
7.	Chandler Williams	WR	5'11"	184	FIU

The team bid adieu to a number of otherwise productive players whose styles did not fit its scheme. Wiggins, for example, will be replaced by the faster and more fluid Shiancoe. Smoot, meanwhile, was not nearly physical enough at the line of scrimmage to play in a cover 2 defense. The rest of the offseason was devoted to finding offensive playmakers. Peterson, if he is healthy, will give the team its biggest backfield threat since Robert Smith retired in 2000. The arrival of Wade signified the team's desire to accumulate receivers who makes plays after the catch, something neither Taylor nor Robinson were adept at. Wade and three draft choices — Rice, Allison and Williams — will be asked to lead a renaissance at the position.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Brad Johnson*	439	270	2,750	9	15
Tarvaris Jackson	81	47	475	2	4
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Chester Taylor	303	1,216	4.0		6
Artose Pinner	43	190	4.4		3
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Travis Taylor*	57	651	11.4		3
Mewelde Moore	46	468	10.2		1
Jermaine Wiggins*	46	386	8.4		1

Kicking: Ryan Longwell, 21-25 FGs, 27-28 XPs, 90 points
Tackles: E.J. Henderson, 109; Antoine Winfield, 97
Sacks: Darrion Scott, 5.5
Interceptions: Three players tied with 4
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (6–10)

Sept.	11	at Washington	W	19–16
Sept.	17	Carolina (OT)	W	16–13
Sept.	24	Chicago	L	16–19
Oct.	1	at Buffalo	L	12–17
Oct.	8	Detroit	W	26–17
Oct.	22	at Seattle	W	31–13
Oct.	30	New England	L	7–31
Nov.	5	at San Francisco	L	3– 9
Nov.	12	Green Bay	L	17–23
Nov.	19	at Miami	L	20–24
Nov.	26	Arizona	W	31–26
Dec.	3	at Chicago	L	13–23
Dec.	10	at Detroit	W	30–20
Dec.	17	N.Y. Jets	L	13–26
Dec.	21	at Green Bay	L	7– 9
Dec.	31	St. Louis	L	21–41

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	308.9	23	-13.2
Rushing	113.8	16	-3.5
Passing	195.2	18	-9.6
Scoring	17.6	26	-3.1
Punt Returns	9.8	9	+1.1
Kick Returns	22.6	17	+0.1
Red Zone TD %	45.2	22	-5.6
Defense			
Total Defense	300.2	8	-21.9
Against Rush	61.6	1	-55.7
Against Pass	238.6	31T	+33.8
Points Allowed	20.4	14	-0.3
Interceptions	21	5	+4.7
Sacks	30	25T	-6.3
Turnover Diff.	+4	10T	-

FALCONS

No one in football has put more money and effort into their franchise over the last few years than Atlanta Falcons owner Arthur Blank. But Blank, a huge winner at Home Depot, which turned him into a billionaire, has to be wondering where his ship will land this year. He has had a taste of both the good and the bad since paying $545 million for the team in February 2002.

Blank is working with his third head coach, this time dipping into the college ranks for help and bringing in offensive-minded Bobby Petrino from the University of Louisville. Blank is very aware of the list of coaches lately who have failed to make that jump successfully (Butch Davis and Steve Spurrier, to name two). But so far so good, as Petrino has appeared to bring a sense of order to the club and focus to a locker room that by the end of 2006 had become unresponsive to its coaching staff.

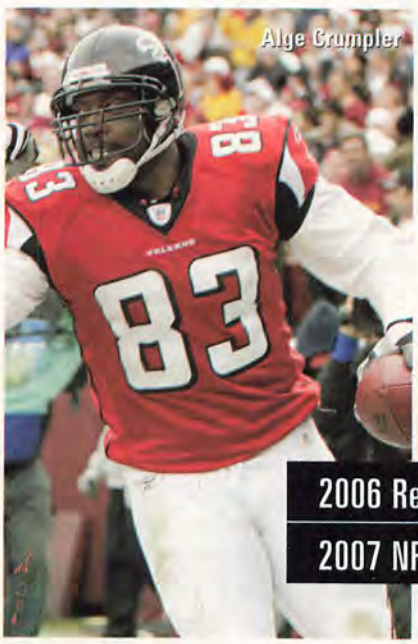
It won't be easy for Petrino, however, who just after the draft found out that because of injuries he would begin summer practice and likely the season without standout defensive tackle Rod Coleman and linebacker Demorrio Williams. There also have been some off-the-field issues concerning quarterback Michael Vick.

Still, the players appear excited after last season's 7–9 breakdown, and second-year defensive back Jimmy Williams said, "Nobody's walking around feeling sorry or anything like that. Things happen. Things you can't predict or expect. Guys have to step up. Guys need to get excited about the opportunity and make the best of it."

For Petrino and his team, the opportunity is certainly there.

Quarterbacks What effect will the offseason have on Vick? Petrino insists that Vick will be focused when he hits the field. But despite the biggest contract in the NFL, this may be a make-or-break year for No. 7. The Falcons traded away coveted backup Matt Schaub to Houston and only signed the embattled Joey Harrington to give them some type of experienced arm if Vick goes down. There is a young arm on hand in D.J. Shockley, who has added a lot of bulk to his 6'0" frame and thrilled coaches with his ability to pick up the system quickly. But the former Georgia star is at least a year away. The Falcons want to see Vick improve his quarterback rating (75.7, fifth in the NFC among QB's who started 16 games last year) and, most importantly, his completion percentage (52.6 percent in 2006). Part of the problem has been receivers who dropped a lot of passes, but the addition of veteran Joe Horn should help that problem. Also, many feel that Vick is much better suited for Petrino's new system, which will allow him to throw short passes and use his feet more than he was able to do under former head coach Jim Mora Jr.

Running Backs The Falcons have had one of the top running games in football over the last three seasons. Warrick Dunn leads the way (286 carries, 1,140 yards, 4 TDs last season), while second-year speedster Jerious Norwood (633 yards and 6.4 per carry) proved that he could also be a go-to back, with breakaway speed. Vick really gives the team another running back, having now run for 1,636 yards over the last two seasons. The difference this season is that the Falcons are getting away from zone blocking schemes and will play more of a power game, though neither Dunn nor Norwood has the frame of a big back. However, fullback Ovie Mughelli comes in and should be a huge addition after signing the biggest contract ever for his position.


Alge Crumpler

Receivers The Falcons' biggest problem over the last two seasons is inconsistency at this spot. They spent two straight first-round picks here (Michael Jenkins and Roddy White) and picked up free agent bust Ashley Lelie but have been unable to get consistent production. So the team signed Horn, who,

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE FALCONS

Two years ago after a loss to the Eagles in the NFC title game, this organization looked like it was ready to become one of the league's best. But since then, Atlanta is 15–17 and an awful 4–12 in the second half of the season, leading to the firing of coach Jim Mora Jr. With Bobby Petrino in charge and a staff that is working around the clock, the Falcons will line up well-prepared on Sunday. But the question is, do they have the horses up front? And how many more off-the-field issues are going to come up and hit Michael Vick right in the face? Still, they certainly have enough talent to be competitive, and their non-conference schedule, which was extremely difficult last season, is at least palatable this year. Like many teams, the Falcons seem to live and die on the shoulders of their quarterback. Vick continues to test the patience of the organization and its fans as many wonder whether he can consistently be the great quarterback he has shown at times. But Vick can't stop the other team from scoring, and with major offseason injuries to two starters, one has to wonder whether the team can find enough help from the bench to compete at a high level. Of course, going into the 2004 season, not many thought much of the team that ended up one win away from the Super Bowl.

2006 Record: 7–9

2007 NFC South Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Minnesota	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	at Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	Carolina	4:15 pm
Sept.	30	Houston	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	at Tennessee	1:00 pm
Oct.	15	N.Y. Giants	8:30 pm
Oct.	21	at New Orleans	1:00 pm
Week	8	BYE	
Nov.	4	San Francisco	1:00 pm
Nov.	1	at Carolina	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Nov.	22	Indianapolis	8:15 pm
Dec.	2	at St. Louis	1:00 pm
Dec.	10	New Orleans	8:30 pm
Dec.	16	at Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at Arizona	4:05 pm
Dec.	30	Seattle	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Crumpler: James Lang/US Presswire
Vick: Paul Jasienski/Getty Images

Falcons QB

Michael Vick

DeAngelo Hall

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

No vacation for Vick What an offseason it has been for Michael Vick. An alleged dog-fighting ring was uncovered on property he owns; airport security officers stopped him in the Miami airport for carrying a suspicious water bottle; and on top of that, he missed a scheduled appearance with lawmakers in Washington to lobby for more after-school funding. This followed a rough season on the field, which included flashing an obscene gesture to heckling Falcons fans. During the draft, Vick met with NFL commissioner Roger Goodell and afterwards said he needed to make some changes about himself.

Still looking for back-to-back In 41 seasons of football, the Falcons have never posted back-to-back winning seasons. They perhaps had their best opportunity in 2005 when they were coming off an 11–5 season and went 6–2 in the first half before losing six of their final eight games.

On the run Despite a 7–9 record last season, the Falcons led the NFL in rushing, finishing with 2,939 yards, some 361 yards better than the next team (San Diego). Of course, a lot of that is due to the fact that they have a quarterback (Vick) who rushed for 1,039 yards on an average of 8.4 yards per attempt. Vick finished 13th in the NFC in rushing.

if he can stay healthy, should be a valuable addition. Also, the sure-handed Brian Finneran returns from season-ending knee surgery last year. Tight end Alge Crumpler remains one of the best in the league. His numbers were as good last season as they were in 2005 when he went to the Pro Bowl. Help could also come from third-round pick Laurent Robinson of Illinois State.

Offensive Linemen The move away from zone blocking means the Falcons will have to be patient here as they transition to the power game. Center Todd McClure may not be the best in the league, but he is very consistent. So is right guard Kynan Forney. Rookie Justin Blalock, a second-round pick out of Texas, will handle the left guard spot. Big left tackle Wayne Gandy is better at blocking in the run game, while right tackle Todd Weiner struggled at times last season. Depth is an issue here.

Defensive Linemen There are concerns from the left side to the right side. First, mainstay Patrick Kerney is gone. Jamaal Anderson inherits his left defensive end spot. Coleman could be out until midseason after thigh surgery from a jet-ski accident. Replacing him could be the very capable Jonathan Babineaux, though he may be facing some legal issues off the field. The other off-field issue is nose tackle Grady Jackson, a solid run-stopper who is suing the Falcons for allegedly disclosing private medical information to the media last summer. At press time, he had not taken part in any offseason workouts. Another concern is right defensive end John Abraham, who, when healthy, is as good as anyone in the league. Injuries limited his playing time after he came over from the Jets last season.

Linebackers After surgery to repair a pectoral muscle injured in the weight room, Williams will likely miss the first part of the season. This opens up the door for fourth-round pick Stephen Nicholas to make an immediate impact. He'll be working alongside Keith Brooking, who moves back to the inside. Brooking has been the most consistent defensive player on the team this decade as well as being its best tackler. Michael Boley mans the strong side. Boley, entering his third season, has become one of the league's top young talents at linebacker.

Defensive Backs The Falcons wanted to draft safety LaRon Landry and put him in center field, but with Landry already off the board, they waited until the second round and took Arkansas cornerback Chris Houston, who many considered the best cover guy in the draft. This allows Jimmy Williams to move from corner to free safety. Right now, the Falcons have veteran Chris Crocker as their No. 1 free safety, but he struggled last season, and Williams could be in there by the first game. On the strong corner, DeAngelo Hall gives the team one of the best in the game, but he would be a much better player if he stopped talking and focused on playing. He's a poor man's Deion Sanders, whose No. 21 he wears with pride. The club hopes the other corner will eventually be turned over to Houston.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Michael Vick, QB
Always a fantasy threat with his legs, but new passing scheme may help him even more.

Alge Crumpler, TE
Expected to remain Vick's primary target despite changes to the Falcons' passing game.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists Michael Koenen opened last season handling punting, kickoff and field goal duties. It didn't work, and the team eventually brought in veteran Morten Andersen. This year, the team hopes Billy Cundiff can take over field goals. He kicked in five games for the Saints last year and did play in the postseason. He has good leg strength but has been inconsistent at times, hitting 60-of-83 field goal attempts for his career. Dangerous return man Allen Rossum is back, though he's been a huge disappointment over the last two years thanks to various injuries and inconsistent play.

Coaching Staff Some wonder if Petrino has left the office since he was hired back in January. His work ethic is tremendous, and one player said he almost fainted when he was given the very thick playbook. Petrino loves different formations. Never a friend of the media, Petrino is all business, and that became apparent at the first mini-camp as reporters were herded in for one look at the team and then shown the door. Petrino surrounded himself with very capable coordinators — Hue Jackson on offense and Mike Zimmer on defense. Zimmer, coming over from the Cowboys, is one of the better defensive minds in the game, while Jackson received high marks as a receivers coach in Cincinnati. Petrino loves to throw the football, so expect a wide-open offense coupled with a disciplined, no-nonsense approach.

Hall: David Drapkin/Getty Images; Vick: Mark Langello

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
13	Harrington, Joey	QB	6'4"	220	5	Oregon	FA-Mia-07
3	Shockley, D.J.	QB	6'0"	214	1	Georgia	D7-06
7	Vick, Michael	QB	6'0"	215	6	Virginia Tech	D1-01
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
28	Dunn, Warrick	RB	5'9"	180	10	Florida State	FA-TB-02
22	Henderson, Taurean	RB	5'10"	210	1	Texas Tech	FA-06
44	McCrary, Fred	FB	6'0"	247	10	Mississippi State	FA-04
38	McIntyre, Corey	FB	6'0"	244	2	West Virginia	W-NO-06
34	Mughelli, Ovie	FB	6'1"	255	4	Wake Forest	FA-Bal-07
32	Norwood, Jerious	RB	5'11"	204	1	Mississippi State	D3-06
42	Robertson, Jamal	RB	5'10"	215	5	Ohio Northern	FA-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
85	Blakley, Dwayne	TE	6'4"	257	3	Missouri	W-Ten-04
83	Crumpler, Alge	TE	6'2"	262	6	North Carolina	D2-01
18	Elliott, Jamin	WR	5'11"	195	1	Delaware	FA-06
89	Fells, Daniel	TE	6'4"	252	1	Cal-Davis	FA-06
86	Finneran, Brian	WR	6'5"	217	8	Villanova	FA-00
87	Horn, Joe	WR	6'1"	213	11	Itawamba JC	FA-NO-07
12	Jenkins, Michael	WR	6'4"	217	3	Ohio State	D1b-04
81	Jennings, Adam	WR	5'9"	181	1	Fresno State	D6-06
84	White, Roddy	WR	6'0"	208	2	UAB	D1-05
17	Youngblood, Kevin	WR	6'5"	215	1	Clemson	FA-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
64	Alexander, P.J.	G	6'4"	297	4	Syracuse	FA-06
77	Clabo, Tyson	G	6'6"	314	2	Wake Forest	FA-06
69	Claxton, Ben	G	6'3"	300	2	Ole Miss	W-Pit-05
67	Ferentz, Brian	C	6'3"	282	1	Iowa	FA-06
71	Fonoti, Toniu	G	6'4"	350	5	Nebraska	FA-Mia-07
65	Forney, Kynan	G	6'3"	307	6	Hawaii	D7b-01
72	Gandy, Wayne	T	6'5"	308	13	Auburn	T-NO-06
73	Jordan, Leander	T	6'4"	320	7	Indiana (Pa.)	FA-SD-07
68	Lacy, Bo	OL	6'4"	300	1	Arkansas	FA-06
62	McClure, Todd	C	6'1"	286	8	LSU	D7a-99
76	Ojinnaka, Quinn	T	6'5"	292	1	Syracuse	D5-06
70	Omiyale, Frank	T	6'4"	310	2	Tennessee Tech	D5b-05
63	Palermo, Jason	OL	6'3"	307	1	Wisconsin	FA-06
74	Weiner, Todd	T	6'4"	297	9	Kansas State	FA-Sea-02
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
55	Abraham, John	DE	6'4"	258	7	South Carolina	T-NYJ-06
95	Babineaux, Jonathan	DT	6'2"	286	2	Iowa	D2-05
96	Bozeman, Michael	DT	6'2"	290	1	Ole Miss	FA-06
91	Carrington, Paul	DE	6'7"	250	1	UCF	FA-06
75	Coleman, Rod	DT	6'2"	285	8	East Carolina	FA-Oak-04
92	Davis, Chauncey	DE	6'2"	277	2	Florida State	D4-05
90	Jackson, Grady	DT	6'2"	345	10	Knoxville	FA-06
99	Jackson, Tommy	DT	6'1"	311	1	Auburn	FA-06
94	Mallard, Josh	DE	6'2"	259	2	Georgia	FA-06
71	Shropshire, Darrell	DT	6'2"	301	2	South Carolina	D7-05
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
52	Beck, Jordan	LB	6'2"	233	2	Cal Poly	D3-05
59	Boley, Michael	LB	6'3"	236	2	Southern Miss	D5a-05
56	Brooking, Keith	LB	6'2"	245	9	Georgia Tech	D1-98
53	Leake, John	LB	6'0"	228	2	Clemson	FA-06
50	Wilkins, Marcus	LB	6'2"	231	5	Texas	FA-Cin-07
51	Williams, Demorrio	LB	6'0"	232	3	Nebraska	D4-04
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
29	Cash, Chris	CB	5'10"	185	5	USC	FA-05
25	Crocker, Chris	S	5'11"	192	4	Marshall	T-Cle-06
21	Hall, DeAngelo	CB	5'10"	197	3	Virginia Tech	D1a-04
35	Hobbs, Kevin	CB	6'0"	195	1	Auburn	FA-06
37	Johnson, Derrick	CB	5'10"	186	2	Washington	FA-06
26	Lowe, Omare	CB	6'1"	195	5	Washington	W-Sea-05
36	Milloy, Lawyer	S	6'0"	210	11	Washington	FA-06
40	Reed, J.R.	S	5'11"	202	3	South Florida	FA-06
20	Rossum, Allen	CB	5'8"	178	9	Notre Dame	FA-GB-02
29	Sanders, Lewis	CB	6'1"	208	7	Maryland	FA-Hou-07
30	Schulters, Lance	S	6'2"	202	8	Hofstra	FA-06
24	Williams, Jimmy	CB	6'2"	216	1	Virginia Tech	D2-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
4	Cundiff, Billy	K	6'0"	200	5	Drake	FA-NO-07
9	Koenen, Michael	P	5'11"	195	2	Western Washington	FA-05
47	Stutz, Boone	LS	6'6"	260	1	Texas A&M	FA-06

Head Coach: Bobby Petrino (First season)
Offensive Coordinator: Hue Jackson
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Zimmer

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	12	Michael Jenkins
WR	**87**	**Joe Horn**
LT	72	Wayne Gandy
LG	**63**	**Justin Blalock**
C	62	Todd McClure
RG	65	Kynan Forney
RT	74	Todd Weiner
TE	83	Alge Crumpler
QB	7	Michael Vick
FB	**34**	**Ovie Mughelli**
RB	28	Warrick Dunn

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	**98**	**Jamaal Anderson**
NT	90	Grady Jackson
UT	75	Rod Coleman
DE	55	John Abraham
BLB	59	Michael Boley
MLB	56	Keith Brooking
WLB	51	Demorrio Williams
CB	21	DeAngelo Hall
CB	**23**	**Chris Houston**
SS	36	Lawyer Milloy
FS	25	Chris Crocker

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	**4**	**Billy Cundiff**
P	9	Michael Koenen

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**13**	**Joey Harrington**
RB	32	Jerious Norwood
WR	86	Brian Finneran
WR	84	Roddy White
UT	95	Jonathan Babineaux
WLB	**54**	**Stephen Nicholas**
FS	24	Jimmy Williams

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Georgia Dome (71,149)
Surface: Field Turf
www.atlantafalcons.com
Ticket Info: 404-223-8000
Training Camp: Falcons Training Facility

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

K	Billy Cundiff (NO)
QB	Joey Harrington (Mia)
WR	Joe Horn (NO)
FB	Ovie Mughelli (Bal)
LB	Marcus Wilkins (Cin)

Key Losses

DE	Patrick Kerney (Sea)
G	Matt Lehr (TB)
CB	Kevin Mathis (FA)
QB	Matt Schaub (Hou)

2007 Draft

1.	Jamaal Anderson	DE	6'6"	279	Arkansas
2.	Justin Blalock	T	6'4"	329	Texas
2.	Chris Houston	CB	5'11"	185	Arkansas
3.	Laurent Robinson	WR	6'1"	193	Illinois State
4.	Stephen Nicholas	OLB	6'1"	232	South Florida
4.	Martrez Milner	TE	6'4"	256	Georgia
6.	Trey Lewis	DT	6'3"	318	Washburn
6.	David Irons	CB	5'10"	188	Auburn
6.	Doug Datish	C	6'4"	302	Ohio State
6.	Daren Stone	SS	6'3"	218	Maine
7.	Jason Snelling	RB	5'11"	232	Virginia

The offseason brought the departure of defensive end Kerney to free agency and the trade of Schaub. Kerney is a major loss, but the team had no choice but to cut him loose because of the salary cap, and it hopes to replace him with first-round pick Anderson. In return for Schaub, the club picked up extra draft picks, which will come in handy with the loss of Rod Coleman and Demorrio Williams to injuries. Anderson is going to have to make an immediate impact for a team that has regressed considerably on defense, as well as veteran Horn at the receiver spot. Another key will be the addition of Harrington, who has never lived up to his billing. But because Michael Vick has yet to go a season without missing some time, he'll have to be ready.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Michael Vick	388	204	2,474	20	13
Matt Schaub*	27	18	208	1	2
Rushing	**Att.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Warrick Dunn	286		1,140	4.0	4
Michael Vick	123		1,039	8.4	2
Jerious Norwood	99		633	6.4	2
Receiving	**Rec.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Alge Crumpler	56		780	13.9	8
Roddy White	30		506	16.9	0
Michael Jenkins	39		436	11.2	7

Kicking: Morten Andersen*, 20-23 FGs, 27-27 XPs, 87 points
Tackles: Keith Brooking, 136; Lawyer Milloy, 98
Sacks: Rod Coleman, 6
Interceptions: DeAngelo Hall, 4
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (7–9)

Sept.	10	at Carolina	W	20– 6
Sept.	17	Tampa Bay	W	14– 3
Sept.	25	at New Orleans	L	3–23
Oct.	1	Arizona	W	32–10
Oct.	15	N.Y. Giants	L	14–27
Oct.	22	Pittsburgh (OT)	W	41–38
Oct.	29	at Cincinnati	W	29–27
Nov.	5	at Detroit	L	14–30
Nov.	12	Cleveland	L	13–17
Nov.	19	at Baltimore	L	10–24
Nov.	26	New Orleans	L	13–31
Dec.	3	at Washington	W	24–14
Dec.	10	at Tampa Bay	W	17– 6
Dec.	16	Dallas	L	28–38
Dec.	24	Carolina	L	3–10
Dec.	31	at Philadelphia	L	17–24

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	331.9	12	+9.8
Rushing	183.7	1	+66.4
Passing	148.2	32	-56.6
Scoring	18.2	25	-2.5
Punt Returns	7.8	27	-0.9
Kick Returns	22.7	15	+0.2
Red Zone TD %	42.6	27	-8.2
Defense			
Total Defense	332.8	22	+10.7
Against Rush	103.6	9	-13.7
Against Pass	229.3	29	+24.5
Points Allowed	20.5	15T	-0.2
Interceptions	12	25T	-4.3
Sacks	37	14	+0.7
Turnover Diff.	+6	8	-

PANTHERS

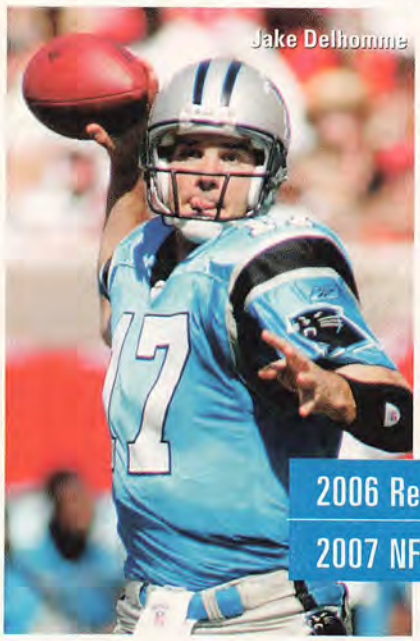
The Panthers think there is a very good NFL team hidden somewhere in Charlotte. And they believe they can locate it once again. For that reason, they made very few waves in free agency in 2007 despite a disappointing 8–8 finish in 2006 — a season in which many prognosticators had picked them to win the Super Bowl.

The Panthers have 20 of 22 starters returning this season, which shows consistency. Then again, they were a .500 squad in 2006. The number of injured starters coming back to full strength, though, makes Carolina believe it can make a run deep into the playoffs once again (although others outside the organization aren't as convinced). Coach John Fox fired three assistants after last season and has installed a new offensive coordinator in Jeff Davidson.

Quarterbacks At 32, Jake Delhomme remains the Panthers' unquestioned starter — at least for now. Delhomme, with his gambling, emotional style, is easily the most successful quarterback in Carolina history. He will begin the season at No. 1 and may well stay there all season. However, Carolina brought in a realistic alternative to Delhomme in the offseason — former Houston quarterback David Carr, who is five years younger and has actually started more NFL games (with far fewer wins). Carr knows his role is to be the backup this season. He says he wants to remember why the game is fun again. He has a stronger arm than Delhomme but little familiarity with Carolina's players, and he did get jumpy in the pocket in Houston far too often. The Panthers waived Chris Weinke in the offseason, so the No. 3 quarterback should be the young and untested Brett Basanez.

Running Backs The Panthers have at least three running backs who should play in 2007, but they have zero running backs who have ever had a 1,000-yard season in the NFL. DeShaun Foster and DeAngelo Williams will be locked in a battle in training camp for the most playing time and most carries. They have similar, bounce-it-to-the-outside styles and were miscast last season as the Panthers ran far too often up the middle. Williams has a little more breakaway ability — the Panthers hope to get him in open space more this season — but Foster is a little bigger and has been a longtime Fox favorite. The question mark here is Eric Shelton — a big-bodied, second-round pick in 2005 who has been buried on the bench the past two seasons. Shelton was supposed to be the next Stephen Davis, but former coordinator Dan Henning and Fox never trusted him enough to give him the ball. At fullback, Brad Hoover is used almost exclusively as a blocker. Nick Goings is a utility back who is also valuable on special teams.

Receivers Expect the Panthers to try to get Pro Bowler Steve Smith the ball more often this season. Smith, their best offensive weapon, had a fine year by most receivers' standards (1,166 yards) last season but only an average one by his own. By midseason, NFL teams had decided that the Panthers' offense couldn't beat them otherwise and that double-teaming Smith on practically every play was the easiest way to stop the Panthers. Carolina will try to put him in motion more this season and shake him free. The new No. 2 receiver will be either Drew Carter (fast and lanky) or rookie Dwayne Jarrett (slower but stronger). Both are tall threats to complement Smith. The Panthers took a big gamble by releasing Keyshawn Johnson in May. He was a strong blocker and still a good possession receiver. Jarrett is supposed to be a younger version of Johnson without the outsized personality. Carter is a speedy downfield threat but must become more consistent. Keary Colbert had a promising rookie year and has been a bust since. At tight end, longtime starter Kris Mangum retired, which opens that job up for the inconsistent Michael Gaines and second-year player Jeff King.


Jake Delhomme

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE PANTHERS

The Carolina Panthers were severely disappointed in their 8–8 record in 2006. That mark continued the yo-yo regime of Panthers coach John Fox and general manager Marty Hurney, both of whom are on a relatively warm seat this season. If Carolina has a horrendous year, both could be gone by 2008. The Panthers have alternated good years with bad ones for the last four in a row — a Super Bowl appearance in the 2003 season and an NFC championship game berth two years later; out of the playoffs at 7–9 in 2004 and again in '06. To get back on the right side of that equation, Carolina has gambled by standing pat. The Panthers have decided that 2006 was basically a product of bad luck — in terms of key injuries and close losses — and so they barely dipped a toe into the NFL's free agent market in early 2007. "Patience is not a bad word," Hurney keeps saying. Instead, Carolina believes that the return of injured players like middle linebacker Dan Morgan, left tackle Travelle Wharton and center Justin Hartwig will settle down a team that has a strong defense (No. 7 overall in 2006) and two marquee players — wide receiver Steve Smith and defensive end Julius Peppers. But Carolina struggled terribly running the ball and scoring points last season. Fox fired three coaches following last season, including offensive coordinator Dan Henning. The coach plans on revamping Carolina's run game with a new zone-blocking scheme.

2006 Record: 8–8

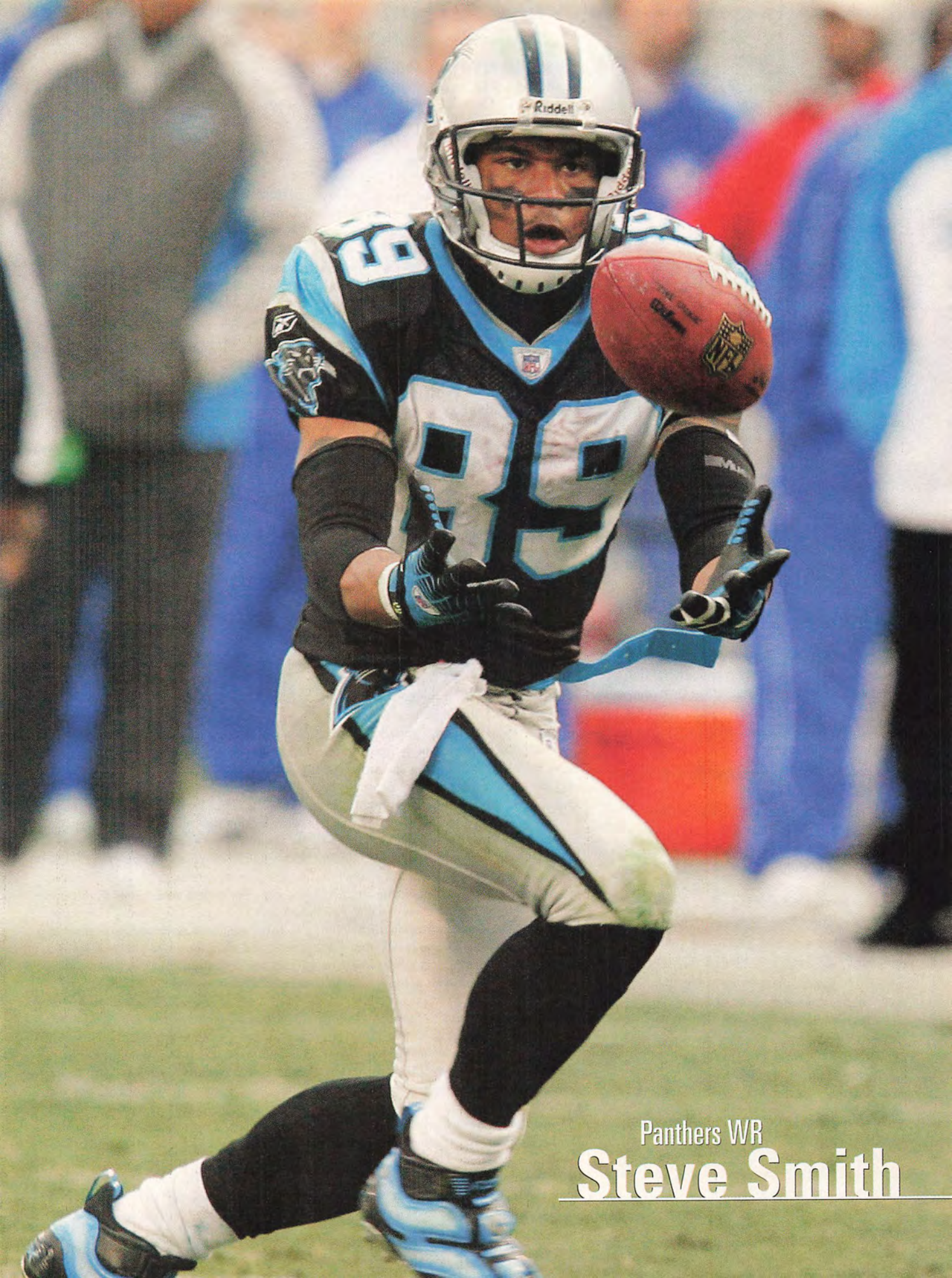
2007 NFC South Prediction: 2nd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at St. Louis	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	Houston	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Atlanta	4:15 pm
Sept.	30	Tampa Bay	4:05 pm
Oct.	7	at New Orleans	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Arizona	4:05 pm
Week	7	BYE	
Oct.	28	Indianapolis	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	at Tennessee	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	Atlanta	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at Green Bay	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	New Orleans	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	San Francisco	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Seattle	1:00 pm
Dec.	22	Dallas	8:15 pm
Dec.	30	at Tampa Bay	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Delhomme: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports
Smith: Bob Donnan/US Presswire



Panthers WR

Steve Smith

Julius Peppers

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Cowher power John Fox isn't one for looking over his shoulder, which is a good thing. The most eligible NFL coach not currently in the NFL — Bill Cowher — has relocated just 150 miles away in Raleigh. Expect Panther fans to mention this geographical fact a few thousand times when Carolina struggles this season.

Carr talk The Panthers' most discussed offseason move was bringing in former Houston quarterback David Carr as Jake Delhomme's backup. Carr, who signed a two-year contract, said he was in no hurry to play and that he would be Delhomme's "biggest fan." He added: "I need to take a deep breath here, be around a good environment, and get back to enjoying the game again."

Sack by Peppers Julius Peppers has had at least 10 sacks in four of his first five NFL seasons. Only eight other NFL players have done that since sacks became an official statistic in 1982. Peppers also is an underrated field goal blocker — he has five in his career.

Kasay at the bat Kicker John Kasay, 37, who is now 17th in the NFL all-time in points scored, hasn't missed a kick from under 50 yards since 2005. Kasay was 24-of-27 in 2006, including 20-of-20 from under 50.

Offensive Linemen The Panthers will switch to the zone-blocking scheme recently made popular by Denver and Atlanta. Fox and Davidson believe it fits Carolina's personnel better. For the past several seasons, the Panthers have had fairly athletic but somewhat small linemen by NFL standards who have trouble blowing people off the ball. Left tackle Travelle Wharton will be a key. Delhomme's blindside protector was knocked out for the year with a knee injury last season in the first quarter of the first game. Wharton's return allows Jordan Gross to shift back to his more natural right tackle position. Center Justin Hartwig — a free-agent signing in 2006 who was a bust last season due to a recurring groin problem — will get a shot at taking that job again. So will second-round draft pick Ryan Kalil, a smart player whose father played center in the USFL. Left guard Mike Wahle is an ornery type who has been in the Pro Bowl. Evan Mathis probably has the best shot among a group of mediocre players at right guard. Will Montgomery and Rashad Butler, two second-year players with some potential, could emerge.

Defensive Linemen This is the Panthers' defensive strength. Left defensive end Julius Peppers ranks as one of the NFL's best. He's obviously a great pass rusher, but the underappreciated part of his play is how good he's become against the run. The Panthers just want to free Peppers up to make more plays by surrounding him with more talent and shifting him around more. Although there had been speculation that end Mike Rucker would be waived because he tore his ACL in December and is 32 years old, the Panthers kept him. He may be spelled more this season by third-round pick Charles Johnson or Stanley McClover, who showed some decent pass-rushing talent in limited action last season. On the inside, Maake Kemoeatu is strictly a run-stopper at left defensive tackle. Although the Panthers actively shopped Pro Bowl tackle Kris Jenkins for much of the offseason, they didn't find an offer they liked, and he will return at right tackle. Jenkins has had weight issues for years but can be dominant at times.

Linebackers The biggest 'X' factor this season for Carolina is middle linebacker Dan Morgan, who can be one of the league's best when he's healthy — but he's not healthy very often. Morgan's biggest problem is a repeated series of career-threatening concussions. He has missed 42 percent of the Panthers' regular-season games since entering the league in 2001. First-round pick Jon Beason will get some immediate playing time. He might beat out veteran Na'il Diggs and James Anderson at weak-side linebacker. Beason is an explosive hitter and has a Miami pedigree like Morgan (whom he could replace in the middle if Morgan gets hurt again). Strong-side linebacker Thomas Davis, who has been on-and-off his first two seasons, is hoping for a breakthrough year.

Defensive Backs The Panthers feel that cornerback is one of their strongest positions — Chris Gamble, Richard Marshall and Ken Lucas give Carolina three good options as starters. Whoever doesn't win a starting job in training camp will be the nickel back. Although Gamble will make some bad decisions, he's also the most athletic of the three and most likely to start. Safety, though, is one of Carolina's biggest concerns. Mike Minter returns for what he has said will be his final season. He's lost a step and rarely produces turnovers anymore. The other starting position is a question — it could be 2006 fourth-round draft pick Nate Salley or one of several free agents.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Steve Smith, WR
Injuries and QB problems dragged his numbers down last season. Look for a rebound.

DeShaun Foster, RB
Should be helped by a healthy offensive line, but will share the stage with DeAngelo Williams.

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Specialists The Panthers were very good when kicking the ball in 2006 and very bad in returning it. Punter Jason Baker and kicker John Kasay rank as two of the NFL's best and most consistent kickers. However, the Panthers ranked dead last in both punt and kickoff returns last season. They hope Williams will be a more consistent kickoff threat and that fourth-round draft choice Ryne Robinson emerges in camp as a dangerous punt returner.

Coaching Staff Fox's reputation took a hit last season, as Carolina struggled through a disappointing season that should have been much better. Fox often seems to coach better when his team isn't burdened by big expectations, which will be the case again this season. Davidson, the new offensive coordinator, says he wants to get the ball to Smith more and play hard-nosed football. The Panthers need to make better halftime adjustments this season. They were outscored 110–55 in the fourth quarter in 2006.

Peppers: Steve Moore; Foster: Brad Schloss

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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
14	Basanez, Brett	QB	6'2"	210	1	Northwestern	FA-06
8	Carr, David	QB	6'3"	216	5	Fresno State	FA-Hou-07
17	Delhomme, Jake	QB	6'2"	215	8	UL Lafayette	FA-NO-03
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
26	Foster, DeShaun	RB	6'0"	222	5	UCLA	D2-02
37	Goings, Nick	RB	6'0"	225	6	Pittsburgh	FA-01
24	Haynes, Alex	RB	5'10"	223	1	UCF	FA-05
45	Hoover, Brad	FB	6'0"	245	7	Western Carolina	FA-00
48	Jackson, Steven	FB	6'2"	260	1	Clemson	FA-06
32	Shelton, Eric	RB	6'1"	246	2	Louisville	D2-05
34	Williams, DeAngelo	RB	5'9"	217	1	Memphis	D1-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
11	Biddle, Taye	WR	6'1"	175	1	Ole Miss	FA-06
18	Carter, Drew	WR	6'3"	200	3	Ohio State	D5-04
83	Colbert, Keary	WR	6'1"	200	3	USC	D2-04
85	Davis, Charles	TE	6'6"	260	1	Purdue	FA-06
84	Gaines, Michael	TE	6'3"	280	3	UCF	D7-04
15	Hill, Efrem	WR	6'0"	179	1	Samford	FA-06
87	King, Jeff	TE	6'3"	253	1	Virginia Tech	D5-06
12	McCullum, Justin	WR	6'4"	220	1	Stanford	FA-06
85	Samp, Chris	WR	6'3"	217	1	Winona State	FA-05
89	Smith, Steve	WR	5'9"	185	6	Utah	D3-01
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
76	Batiste, D'Anthony	G	6'4"	318	1	UL Lafayette	FA-06
73	Bridges, Jeremy	T	6'4"	326	4	Southern Miss	FA-06
79	Butler, Rashad	T	6'4"	293	1	Miami	D3b-06
78	Fordham, Todd	T	6'5"	319	10	Florida State	T-Pit-04
69	Gross, Jordan	T	6'4"	300	4	Utah	D1-03
63	Hangartner, Geoff	C	6'5"	301	2	Texas A&M	D5b-05
75	Hartwig, Justin	C	6'4"	312	5	Kansas	FA-Ten-06
61	Kadela, Dave	T	6'6"	304	5	Virginia Tech	FA-04
71	Mathis, Evan	G	6'5"	304	2	Alabama	D3a-05
66	Montgomery, Will	C	6'3"	312	1	Virginia Tech	D7-06
64	Peters, Scott	G	6'3"	300	3	Arizona State	FA-05
65	Sims, Wes	G	6'4"	317	2	Oklahoma	FA-06
68	Wahle, Mike	G	6'6"	304	9	Navy	FA-GB-05
70	Wharton, Travelle	T	6'4"	312	3	South Carolina	D3-04
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
67	Carstens, Jordan	DT	6'5"	300	3	Iowa State	FA-04
60	Grigsby, Otis	DE	6'3"	260	2	Kentucky	FA-06
77	Jenkins, Kris	DT	6'4"	335	6	Maryland	D2-01
99	Kemoeatu, Maake	DT	6'5"	350	5	Utah	FA-Bal-06
92	Lewis, Damione	DT	6'2"	301	6	Miami	FA-StL-06
74	McClover, Stanley	DE	6'2"	263	1	Auburn	D7b-06
94	Moorehead, Kindal	DT	6'2"	285	4	Alabama	D5-03
90	Peppers, Julius	DE	6'7"	283	5	North Carolina	D1-02
93	Rucker, Micheal	DE	6'5"	275	8	Nebraska	D2b-99
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Anderson, James	LB	6'2"	232	1	Virginia Tech	D3a-06
58	Davis, Thomas	LB	6'0"	231	2	Georgia	D1-05
53	Diggs, Na'il	LB	6'4"	240	7	Ohio State	FA-GB-06
57	Jamison, Brandon	LB	6'1"	205	1	West Georgia	FA-06
56	Kyle, Jason	LB	6'3"	242	12	Arizona State	FA-SF-01
55	Morgan, Dan	LB	6'2"	245	6	Miami	D1-01
59	Seward, Adam	LB	6'2"	248	2	UNLV	D5a-05
49	Wusu, Timi	LB	6'3"	220	1	Stanford	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
28	Branch, Colin	S	5'11"	205	4	Stanford	D4-03
27	Byrum, Dion	CB	5'10"	192	1	Ohio	FA-06
20	Gamble, Chris	CB	6'1"	200	3	Ohio State	D1-04
38	Hill, Eric	CB	6'0"	190	1	Colorado State	FA-06
23	Howard, Reggie	CB	6'0"	185	7	Memphis	FA-Mia-06
21	Lucas, Ken	CB	6'0"	205	6	Ole Miss	FA-Sea-05
31	Marshall, Richard	CB	5'11"	189	1	Fresno State	D2-06
30	Minter, Mike	S	5'10"	195	10	Nebraska	D2-97
35	Morton, Christian	CB	6'0"	181	2	Illinois	FA-06
33	Salley, Nate	S	6'1"	216	1	Ohio State	D4-06
22	Strait, Derrick	CB	5'11"	189	3	Oklahoma	W-Chi-06
36	Williams, Shaun	S	6'2"	218	9	UCLA	FA-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
7	Baker, Jason	P	6'2"	205	6	Iowa	T-Den-05
4	Kasay, John	K	5'10"	198	16	Georgia	FA-Sea-95

Head Coach: John Fox (44–36, 5–2 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Jeff Davidson
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Trgovac

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	18	Drew Carter
WR	89	Steve Smith
LT	70	Travelle Wharton
LG	68	Mike Wahle
C	75	Justin Hartwig
RG	71	Evan Mathis
RT	69	Jordan Gross
TE	84	Michael Gaines
QB	17	Jake Delhomme
FB	45	Brad Hoover
RB	26	DeShaun Foster

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	90	Julius Peppers
DT	99	Maake Kemoeatu
DT	77	Kris Jenkins
DE	93	Mike Rucker
SLB	58	Thomas Davis
MLB	55	Dan Morgan
WLB	53	Na'il Diggs
CB	31	Richard Marshall
CB	20	Chris Gamble
FS	30	Mike Minter
SS	33	Nate Salley

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	4	John Kasay
P	7	Jason Baker

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**8**	**David Carr**
RB	34	DeAngelo Williams
WR	**80**	**Dwayne Jarrett**
LB	**52**	**Jon Beason**
CB	21	Ken Lucas

New acquisitions in **bold**

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OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

QB	David Carr	(Hou)

Key Losses

LB	Chris Draft	(StL)
WR	Keyshawn Johnson	(FA)
TE	Kris Mangum	(Retired)
DE	Al Wallace	(FA)
QB	Chris Weinke	(FA)

2007 Draft

1.	Jon Beason	OLB	6'0"	236	Miami
2.	Dwayne Jarrett	WR	6'5"	213	USC
2.	Ryan Kalil	C	6'3"	291	USC
3.	Charles Johnson	DE	6'2"	272	Georgia
4.	Ryne Robinson	WR	5'8"	178	Miami (Ohio)
5.	Dante Rosario	TE	6'3"	244	Oregon
5.	Tim Shaw	ILB	6'1"	237	Penn State
7.	C.J. Wilson	CB	6'1"	195	Baylor

The Panthers were the least active that they have been in years in the free agent market. Unless Carr, the new backup quarterback, steps in for Jake Delhomme at some point in 2007, whatever impact they get from new players this year will come from their draft choices. Beason is an explosive linebacker — better against the run than the pass — who could either start on the weak side or play middle linebacker if Dan Morgan gets hurt. Jarrett is a big, strong possession receiver in the mold of Johnson, whom the Panthers released three days after drafting Jarrett. Kalil, a center, is football-smart and will compete for playing time right away. Robinson is already the leader in the clubhouse for the punt-returning job. As for Carr, he will be a far better backup than Weinke was, but the Panthers still consider Delhomme as their clear No. 1.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Jake Delhomme	431	263	2,805	17	11
Chris Weinke*	96	56	625	2	4
Rushing	**Att.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
DeShaun Foster	227		897	4.0	3
DeAngelo Williams	121		501	4.1	1
Receiving	**Rec.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Steve Smith	83		1,166	14.0	8
Keyshawn Johnson*	70		815	11.6	4
Drew Carter	28		357	12.8	3

Kicking: John Kasay, 24-27 FGs, 28-28 XPs, 100 points
Tackles: Chris Draft,* 107; Thomas Davis, 88
Sacks: Julius Peppers, 13
Interceptions: Three players with 3
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	10	Atlanta	L	6–20
Sept.	17	at Minnesota (OT)	L	13–16
Sept.	24	at Tampa Bay	W	26–24
Oct.	1	New Orleans	W	21–18
Oct.	8	Cleveland	W	20–12
Oct.	15	at Baltimore	W	23–21
Oct.	22	at Cincinnati	L	14–17
Oct.	29	Dallas	L	14–35
Nov.	13	Tampa Bay	W	24–10
Nov.	19	St. Louis	W	15– 0
Nov.	26	at Washington	L	13–17
Dec.	4	at Philadelphia	L	24–27
Dec.	10	N.Y. Giants	L	13–27
Dec.	17	Pittsburgh	L	3–37
Dec.	24	at Atlanta	W	10– 3
Dec.	31	at New Orleans	W	31–21

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	307.7	24	-14.4
Rushing	103.7	24	-13.6
Passing	204.0	15	-0.8
Scoring	16.9	27	-3.8
Punt Returns	4.6	32	-4.1
Kick Returns	19.4	32	-3.1
Red Zone TD%	46.9	19	-3.9
Defense			
Total Defense	296.1	7	-26.0
Against Rush	108.6	11	-8.7
Against Pass	187.5	4	-17.3
Points Allowed	19.1	8T	-1.6
Interceptions	14	22T	-2.3
Sacks	41	6T	+4.7
Turnover Diff.	-5	23T	-

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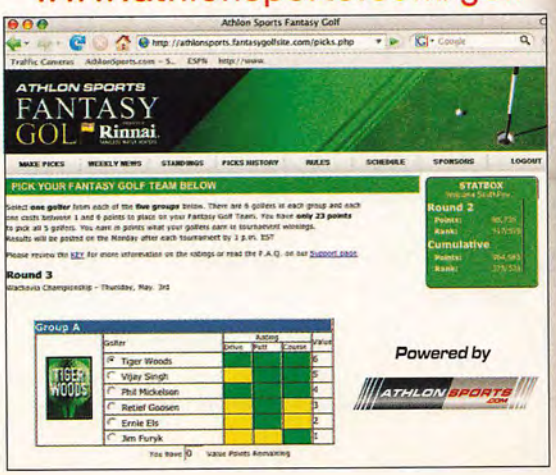


SAINTS

History has spoken: A year after Hurricane Katrina flooded New Orleans, chasing the Saints from their home, the NFL flooded the city with engraved plaques: Sean Payton, Coach of the Year; Mickey Loomis, Executive of the Year; Drew Brees, FedEx Air Player of the Year, co-Man of the Year.

That's what happened when a franchise picked to finish last went from 3–13 to a victory shy of making it to Super Bowl XLI. So what does a no-longer rookie head coach have to say about the feel-good story of 2006?

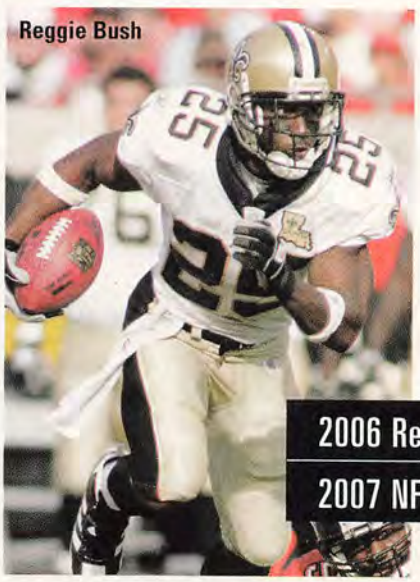
"The idea is to build on what we started," says Payton. "Team chemistry changes from year to year. To me, the most encouraging thing was the mix we had in our locker room, guys who put the team first, veterans and rookies, helping to establish the kind of environment you need in this league. I've been around long enough as an assistant coach to realize what we accomplished was easier than the challenge we face to stay where we are."

The challenge to rebuild what Payton inherited obviously was expedited by the banner season of triggerman Brees, the No. 1 free-agent acquisition, and by the multi-faceted threat of Reggie Bush, the No. 1 draft pick. It was a bonanza supplemented by the performance of linebacker Scott Fujita, the No. 2 free-agent, and wide receiver Marques Colston, a 7th-round pick who became a serious contender for Rookie of the Year.

Quarterbacks It's difficult to overestimate what Brees meant to a franchise that played for the NFC championship for the first time in its 40-year existence. A quarterback coming off major shoulder surgery and a first-year head coach were a match made in heaven, one that involved a cerebral give-and-take that helped produce a league-leading 6,264 yards, a completion percentage of 64.3, 26 touchdown passes and only 11 interceptions. Brees, who led the NFL with 41 completions of 25 yards or more, made Payton look smart by finding the right receiver, by keeping forced throws to a minimum, by taking care of the football. And Payton aided his quarterback's cause with an effective use of Deuce McAllister and Bush as inside-outside threats in the same backfield, as receivers, as willing decoys. Scheduled to return as Brees' backup is 37-year-old Jamie Martin.

Running Backs The bottom line on the first season of McAllister and Bush as teammates was no-ego compatibility. The stat sheet tells you McAllister generated 1,255 yards and 10 TDs rushing and receiving, Bush produced 1,523 and nine TDs rushing, receiving and returning punts. What Payton saw went beyond statistics. "I saw a rookie in a transition period, a kid who kept on digging to reach his comfort level within the offense. And I saw a veteran happy to give a rookie the wisdom he acquired playing in the league."

Receivers For a franchise that has long endured disastrous drafts, it's safe to say the Saints came up with the surprise pick of 2006 in Colston, a seventh-rounder who was runner-up for Rookie of the Year honors. At 6'4", 231, Colston had the size all right, but he played for Division I-AA Hofstra and, aside from that, did not receive a ringing endorsement from his college coach. So, despite missing three games, the guy winds up with 70 catches for 1,038 yards and eight TDs. He also led Saints receivers in fewest drops. Colston was impressive enough in preseason to be penciled in as a starter. He made it easy for Payton to trade Donte' Stallworth to the Eagles before the regular season. And he made it just as easy to turn loose injury-prone Joe Horn following the season. Now, into the mix comes first-round pick Robert Meachem, who could step right into a starting job as the new Horn. The arrival of Colston coincided with the blossoming of Devery Henderson, a second-rounder in '04, whose 23.3-yard average for 32 catches led all NFL receivers with more than 500 receiving yards. At tight end, free-agent Eric Johnson will be sharing time with holdover Mark Campbell.



Reggie Bush

Bush: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports
Brees: Paul Jasienski/Getty Images

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE SAINTS

You have to look at the 2007 Saints as a college team that has all of the key elements returning, the impact players who made a difference, not to mention a coaching staff that went into '06 as a huge question mark and finished with high marks across the board. That's the good news. The bad news is, as the cliché goes, the Saints are going from hunter to hunted. A year ago, they opened the season on the road at Cleveland, a soft touch, it turned out. This time it's a road opener against the defending Super Bowl champions where they cannot expect any favors from longtime Saints fan Peyton Manning. It's not likely an opening loss to the Colts will shape the season. It's more a question of Sean Payton continuing to produce the kind of high-voltage results he generated from the No. 1 offense in the league, and more a question of an over-achieving defense living up to its immediate past. While the loss of injury-prone wideout Joe Horn should be little more than a blip on the radar screen, what matters most of all is Drew Brees remaining injury-free, Deuce McAllister putting an '05 torn ACL further and further behind him and Reggie Bush exploding into even bigger and better Sundays. "Among other things," says Payton, "the trick now is to become more consistent running the ball and forcing more turnovers on defense."

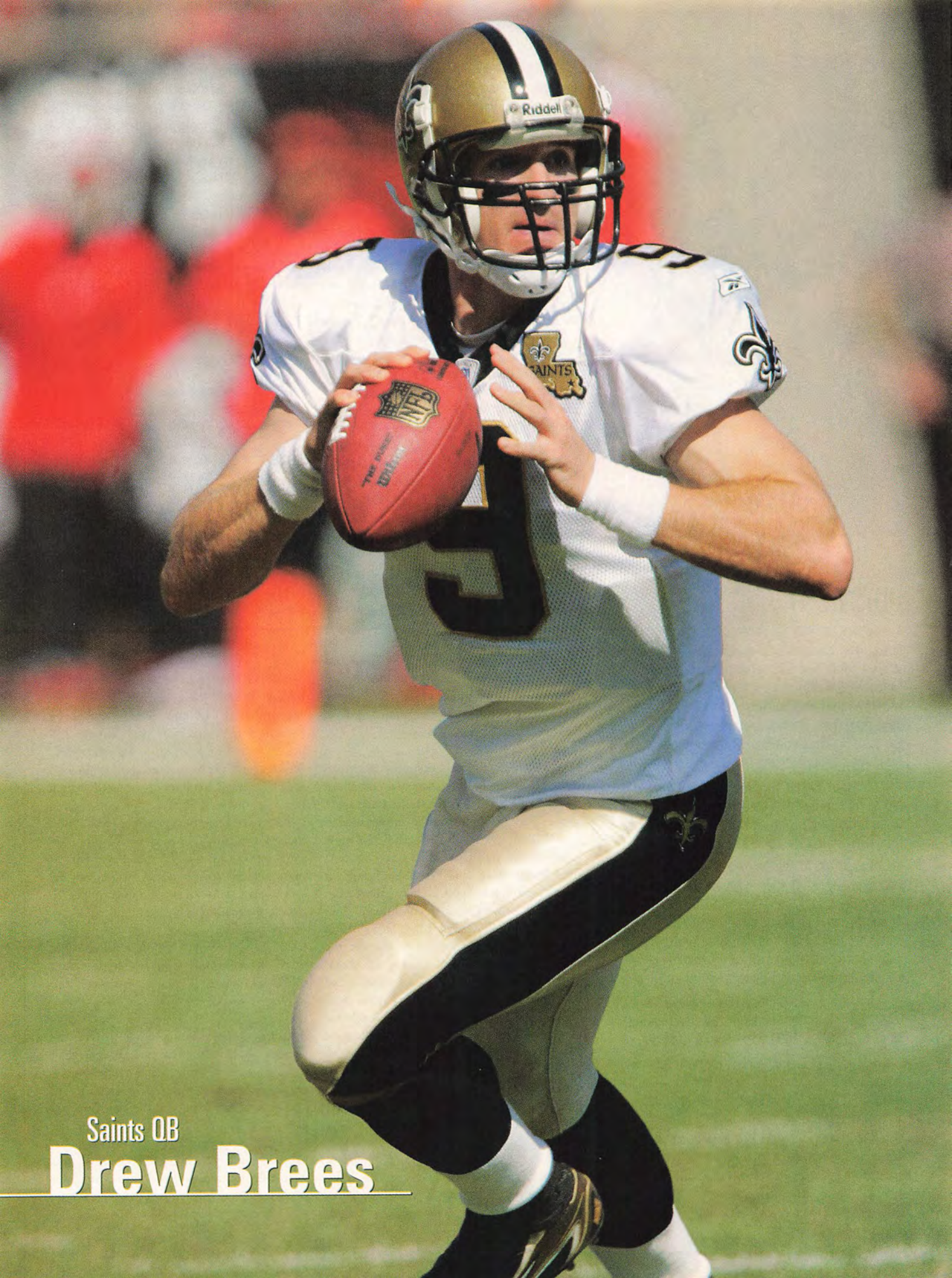
2006 Record: 10–6

2007 NFC South Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	6	at Indianapolis	8:30 pm
Sept.	16	at Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Sept.	24	Tennessee	8:30 pm
Week	4	BYE	
Oct.	7	Carolina	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Seattle	8:15 pm
Oct.	21	Atlanta	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	at San Francisco	4:15 pm
Nov.	4	Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	St. Louis	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at Houston	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	at Carolina	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Dec.	10	at Atlanta	8:30 pm
Dec.	16	Arizona	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	at Chicago	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)



Saints QB

Drew Brees

Marques Colston

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Three No. 1s With 88 receptions, Reggie Bush set an NFL record for a rookie running back. With a combined 158 receptions, Bush and Marques Colston posted the highest total for rookie teammates in NFL history. With 4,418 passing yards, Drew Brees threw for more yards in his first season with a new team than any quarterback in league history.

Injury report Brees says the dislocated left elbow he sustained in the Pro Bowl responded to an offseason program and "will be stronger than it was" in time for training camp.

Bush-vs.-Bush At the White House Correspondents Dinner in Washington, D.C., Reggie Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were tablemates, during which Reggie wound up listening to Condi's take on the situation in Iraq. "I think you're talking to the wrong Bush," said Reggie.

Deuce closes in Five more TDs and Deuce McAllister becomes the club's all-time leader. The No. 1 pick in 2001 has done it 49 times.

Like a bar Says Frank Vuono, marketing executive: "Sports economists can't measure emotion. I don't know anyone who could have anticipated the level of the Saints' post-Katrina success. Sports are elastic. In bad times, people go to sports as a release. In good times, they go as a celebration. Sports are just like a bar."

Offensive Linemen Talk about fate. And good fortune. When the Saints lost center LeCharles Bentley to his hometown Cleveland Browns in free agency, the question was: Who can replace a two-time Pro Bowler? The answer: Jeff Faine, who not only wound up trading places with Bentley after arriving in a draft-day trade but also would start the season against the Browns while Bentley was sitting out with a season-ending knee injury. Faine became part of a unit that included Pro Bowler Jammal Brown at left tackle, a vastly improved Jon Stinchcomb at right tackle, and draft surprise Jahri Evans, a fourth-rounder out of Bloomsburg State, at guard. "As the season went on," says Brees, "every one of those guys improved. You could see the confidence build. I was in good hands."

Defensive Linemen The strength of the line is where it always has been, at the ends, at least as long as two No. 1 picks, Will Smith ('04) and Charles Grant ('02), have been around. Smith is coming off a year in which he recorded a career-high 10.5 sacks along with three forced fumbles and a fumble recovery. Grant, who has never missed a game in his career, needs only four sacks to move among the top 10 on the Saints' all-time list. With a seven-year contract extension that included $20 million in guaranteed money, Grant should be a man on a mission. Smith and Grant are the driving forces of a front that includes Brian Young, Hollis Thomas, a 306-pound run-stopper, and, in a three-man rotation, Willie Whitehead. Payton looks to this unit to jump-start the Saints' goal of creating more turnovers.

Linebackers Of all the question mark areas Payton inherited, linebacker was the most suspect. All of which made his first free-agent signee, Fujita, second only in importance to Brees. Fujita was part of the "Cowboy Connection," traded to Dallas before Payton's final season as a Bill Parcells' assistant. It wasn't long before Scott Shanle arrived from Big-D in exchange for a conditional draft pick and was followed by Mark Simoneau in a trade with the Eagles. Instant starters, the three combined for 309 tackles, 8.5 sacks, three interceptions, seven pass breakups, and two forced fumbles. At Dallas, Payton liked the idea that Fujita played in the 3-4 scheme of Gary Gibbs, who signed on as Payton's defensive coordinator. The most interesting new face, and a likely starter by opening day, is 10-year veteran middle linebacker Brian Simmons, who averaged 86 tackles a year over the last six seasons in Cincinnati.

Defensive Backs Another new face by way of the Bengals is also an expensive one. That would be strong safety Kevin Kaesviharn, attractive enough to draw a $3.25 million signing bonus, part of a four-year, $10 million contract. Kaesviharn will be battling Roman Harper, last year's second-round pick, for a starting job at strong safety. It was a job Harper held until his rookie season ended after five games because of a torn ACL. At free safety, Josh Bullocks, who started the last 29 games, returns after becoming one of the steadiest performers in the secondary. At the corners, Payton is looking for more consistency from Mike McKenzie on one side, while free-agent addition Jason David, a three-year starter for the Colts, is a good bet to replace Fred Thomas.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Drew Brees, QB
He loses Joe Horn, but picks up a receiving TE in Eric Johnson and highly touted rookie WR Robert Meachem.
Reggie Bush, RB
Expected to yield most of the carries to Deuce McAllister, but Bush will catch upwards of 90 passes.

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Specialists The big news was the decision to replace kicker John Carney, a 17-year-veteran, with Olindo Mare, who'll be entering his 11th season after kicking 245 field goals for Miami. Punter Steve Weatherford will be out to keep his job after coming on to replace an injured Mitch Berger at the start of the season and posting a 43.8 average. Bush, whose first NFL touchdown came on a game-winning 65-yard return against Tampa Bay, will be sharing punt-return duties with Michael Lewis, while on kickoffs, Lewis hopes to handle the job alone.

Coaching Staff When Payton took the job, there were skeptics who felt he'd have a tough time talking quality assistants into joining a rookie head coach in a flood-ravaged city. Using a maiden season as a measuring stick, you'd have to say the league's Coach of the Year earned better than passing grades. While the offense grabbed the headlines, the defense in the care of Gibbs was perhaps the bigger surprise, especially at the revamped linebacker positions overseen by veteran Joe Vitt. Overall, going from 2005 to 2006, the Saints were a far more disciplined club with fewer penalties, especially in the offensive line, which did an effective job protecting Brees.

Colston, Brees: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
9	Brees, Drew	QB	6'0"	209	6	Purdue	FA-SD-06
11	Fife, Jason	QB	6'4"	225	1	Oregon	FA-07
10	Martin, Jamie	QB	6'2"	205	12	Weber State	FA-StL-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
25	Bush, Reggie	RB	6'0"	203	1	USC	D1-06
40	Dudley, Kevin	RB	6'0"	238	2	Michigan	FA-07
44	Karney, Mike	FB	5'11"	258	3	Arizona State	D5b-04
26	McAllister, Deuce	RB	6'1"	232	6	Ole Miss	D1-01
27	Stecker, Aaron	RB	5'10"	213	7	Western Illinois	FA-TB-04
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
80	Campbell, Mark	TE	6'6"	260	8	Michigan	FA-06
12	Colston, Marques	WR	6'4"	231	1	Hofstra	D7b-06
18	Copper, Terrance	WR	6'0"	207	3	East Carolina	W-Dal-06
19	Henderson, Devery	WR	5'11"	200	3	LSU	D2a-04
82	Johnson, Eric	TE	6'3"	252	6	Yale	FA-SF-07
89	Jones, Jamal	WR	5'11"	205	1	NC A&T	FA-06
84	Lewis, Michael	WR	5'8"	173	6	None	FA-01
83	Miller, Billy	TE	6'3"	252	7	USC	FA-06
81	Patten, David	WR	5'10"	190	10	Western Carolina	FA-Was-07
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
70	Brown, Jammal	T	6'6"	313	2	Oklahoma	D1-05
73	Evans, Jahri	G	6'4"	318	1	Bloomsburg	D4-06
52	Faine, Jeff	C	6'3"	291	4	Notre Dame	T-Cle-06
76	Goodwin, Jonathan	G/C	6'3"	318	5	Michigan	FA-NYJ-06
67	Nesbit, Jamar	G/T	6'4"	328	8	South Carolina	FA-Jac-04
79	Petitti, Rob	T	6'6"	327	2	Pittsburgh	W-Dal-06
65	Sims, Wes	G	6'4"	317	2	Oklahoma	FA-07
78	Stinchcomb, Jon	T	6'5"	315	4	Georgia	D2-03
64	Strief, Zach	T	6'7"	349	1	Northwestern	D7a-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Cooper, Josh	DE	6'3"	261	1	Ole Miss	FA-06
94	Grant, Charles	DE	6'3"	290	5	Georgia	D1b-02
96	Lake, Antwan	DT	6'4"	308	4	West Virginia	W-Atl-06
77	Leisle, Rodney	DT	6'3"	315	3	UCLA	D5a-04
93	Ninkovich, Rob	DE	6'2"	252	1	Purdue	D5-06
91	Smith, Will	DE	6'3"	282	3	Ohio State	D1-04
99	Thomas, Hollis	DT	6'0"	306	11	Northern Illinois	T-Phi-06
98	Whitehead, Willie	DT	6'3"	300	8	Auburn	FA-99
66	Young, Brian	DT	6'2"	298	7	UTEP	FA-StL-04
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
54	Evans, Troy	LB	6'3"	243	5	Cincinnati	FA-Hou-07
56	Fincher, Alfred	LB	6'1"	238	2	Connecticut	D3-05
55	Fujita, Scott	LB	6'5"	250	5	California	FA-Dal-06
58	Shanle, Scott	LB	6'2"	245	4	Nebraska	T-Dal-06
51	Simmons, Brian	LB	6'3"	240	9	North Carolina	FA-Cin-07
53	Simoneau, Mark	LB	6'0"	245	7	Kansas State	T-Phi-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
20	Bellamy, Jay	S	5'11"	200	13	Rutgers	FA-06
29	Bullocks, Josh	S	6'1"	207	2	Nebraska	D2-05
21	Craft, Jason	CB	5'10"	187	8	Colorado State	T-Jac-04
42	David, Jason	CB	5'8"	180	3	Washington State	FA-Ind-07
37	Gleason, Steve	S	5'11"	212	6	Washington State	FA-01
28	Groce, DeJuan	CB	5'10"	192	4	Nebraska	W-StL-06
41	Harper, Roman	S	6'1"	200	1	Alabama	D2-06
43	Kaesviharn, Kevin	S	6'1"	196	6	Augustana (SD)	FA-Cin-07
34	McKenzie, Mike	CB	6'0"	194	8	Memphis	T-GB-04
22	Thomas, Fred	CB	5'9"	185	11	Tennessee-Martin	FA-Sea-00
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
47	Houser, Kevin	LS	6'2"	252	7	Ohio State	D7-00
2	Mare, Olindo	K	5'11"	190	10	Syracuse	T-Mia-07
7	Weatherford, Steve	P	6'3"	215	1	Illinois	FA-06

Head Coach: Sean Payton (10-6, 1-1 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Doug Marrone
Defensive Coordinator: Gary Gibbs

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	12	Marques Colston
WR	**85**	**Robert Meachem**
LT	70	Jammal Brown
LG	67	Jamar Nesbit
C	52	Jeff Faine
RG	73	Jahri Evans
RT	78	Jon Stinchcomb
TE	80	Mark Campbell
QB	9	Drew Brees
RB	26	Deuce McAllister
RB	25	Reggie Bush

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	94	Charles Grant
DT	66	Brian Young
DT	99	Hollis Thomas
DE	91	Will Smith
LB	55	Scott Fujita
LB	**51**	**Brian Simmons**
LB	58	Scott Shanle
CB	34	Mike McKenzie
CB	**42**	**Jason David**
SS	**43**	**Kevin Kaesviharn**
FS	29	Josh Bullocks

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	**2**	**Olindo Mare**
P	7	Steve Weatherford

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	10	Jamie Martin
WR	19	Devery Henderson
S	20	Jay Bellamy
T	64	Zach Strief
DE	98	Willie Whitehead

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Louisiana Superdome (69,703)
Surface: Field turf
www.neworleanssaints.com
Ticket Info: 504-731-1700
Training Camp Site: Saints Complex

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

CB	Jason David (Ind)
K	Olindo Mare (Mia)
TE	Eric Johnson (SF)
SS	Kevin Kaesviharn (Cin)
WR	David Patten (Was)
LB	Brian Simmons (Cin)

Key Losses

K	John Carney (FA)
TE	Ernie Conwell (FA)
WR	Joe Horn (Atl)
SS	Omar Stoutmire (Was)

2007 Draft

1.	Robert Meachem	WR	6'3"	211	Tennessee
3.	Usama Young	CB	5'11"	186	Kent State
3.	Andy Alleman	G	6'4"	302	Akron
4.	Antonio Pittman	RB	5'11"	195	Ohio State
4.	Jermon Bushrod	T	6'4"	315	Towson
5.	David Jones	CB	6'0"	196	Wingate
7.	Marvin Mitchell	ILB	6'3"	249	Tennessee

Coach Sean Payton looks at Meachem as a neat replacement to ease the loss of Horn. Meachem is a big, physical receiver who had a monster junior season at Tennessee. He should step right into the starting lineup. Payton was also hoping to pick up some needed depth in the offensive line and the secondary. He was happy to land Pittman, a productive yet unheralded tailback from Ohio State. Pittman can step in and ease the workload on workhorse Deuce McAllister. As far as free agent pickups, there's a good chance Kaesviharn (safety), Simmons (linebacker), David (cornerback) and Johnson (tight end) could find their way into the starting lineup at some point.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Drew Brees	554	356	4,418	26	11
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Deuce McAllister	244	1,057	4.3	10	
Reggie Bush	155	565	3.6	6	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Marques Colston	70	1,038	14.8	8	
Reggie Bush	88	742	8.4	2	
Joe Horn*	37	679	18.4	4	
Devery Henderson	32	745	23.3	5	

Kicking: John Carney,* 23-25 FGs, 46-47 XPs, 115 points
Tackles: Scott Shanle, 97; Scott Fujita, 96
Sacks: Will Smith, 10.5
Interceptions: Four players tied with 2
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (10–6)

Sept.	10	at Cleveland	W	19–14
Sept.	17	at Green Bay	W	34–27
Sept.	25	Atlanta	W	23– 3
Oct.	1	at Carolina	L	18–21
Oct.	8	Tampa Bay	W	24–21
Oct.	15	Philadelphia	W	27–24
Oct.	29	Baltimore	L	22–35
Nov.	5	at Tampa Bay	W	31–14
Nov.	12	at Pittsburgh	L	31–38
Nov.	19	Cincinnati	L	16–31
Nov.	26	at Atlanta	W	31–13
Dec.	3	San Francisco	W	34–10
Dec.	10	at Dallas	W	42–17
Dec.	17	Washington	L	10–16
Dec.	24	at N.Y. Giants	W	30– 7
Dec.	31	Carolina	L	21–31
		Postseason		
Jan.	13	Philadelphia	W	27–24
Jan.	21	at Chicago	L	14–39

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	391.5	1	+69.4
Rushing	110.1	19	-7.2
Passing	281.4	1	+76.6
Scoring	25.8	5	+5.1
Punt Returns	7.3	28	-1.4
Kick Returns	23.0	14	+0.5
Red Zone TD %	54.7	11	+3.9
Defense			
Total Defense	307.3	11	-14.8
Against Rush	128.9	23	+11.6
Against Pass	178.4	3	-26.4
Points Allowed	20.1	13	-0.6
Interceptions	11	28T	-5.3
Sacks	38	12T	+1.7
Turnover Diff.	-4	22	-

BUCCANEERS

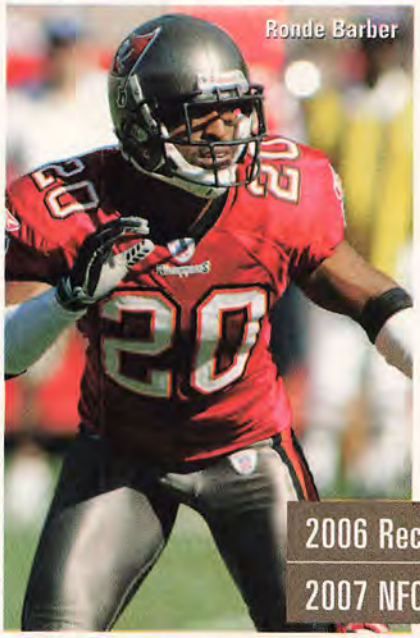
The expiration date for winning a Super Bowl has come and gone for Jon Gruden. The embattled Bucs coach begins the season on the hot seat after three losing records in the past four years. Gruden knows it. That's why he spent the offseason stockpiling quarterbacks the way Florida residents store bottled water during hurricane season. The eventual starter will be Eagles free agent Jeff Garcia, but he won't be working without a net. Chris Simms and Jake Plummer — if he changes his mind on retirement — could also wind up under center.

Since Gruden arrived in 2002 by winning an NFL title in his first season, the Bucs have had seven different starting quarterbacks. But it's not just the offense that's in transition. As many as six projected starters on defense will be over the age of 30 by the start of the season. Gruden is embarrassed by last season's 4–12 mark, but he also doesn't have time to dwell on it.

"It could've all been better. But I'm not going to rehash it now," Gruden says. "I worked as hard as I could. I coached as hard as I could. Some things I feel pretty good about. I've got to get better, consistent play from the quarterback position. It starts right there."

Quarterbacks Garcia is playing for his fourth team in four years, which is not something he's proud of. At 37, Garcia wasn't brought here to hold a clipboard. It's pretty obvious Gruden isn't about to put his future in the hands of Simms again. Simms threw one touchdown and seven interceptions while going 0–3 as the unopposed starter last year. The Bucs thought he would be further along in his development based on a 6–5 mark in 2005. But Simms appeared miscast in the offense and had a lot of passes on three-step drops batted back into his face. The Bucs re-signed Simms to a two-year deal, preventing him from entering free agency. At the very least, Simms can be a valuable backup. The wild card at this position is former Bronco Jake Plummer. The Bucs traded for him even though he seems bent on retirement. Bruce Gradkowski, a sixth-rounder from Toledo, was forced to start 11 games last year and got worse each week. Veteran Luke McCown comes off a torn ACL.

Running Backs The Bucs basically parked Cadillac Williams. In his second pro season, the former Rookie of the Year rushed for 798 yards (3.5 per carry.) and one touchdown. He was impatient at times, trying to force the big play. Williams missed the final two games with a foot injury. Prior to that, he had been given about 80 percent of the rushing attempts. That might be too much for Williams, who shared the load at Auburn with Ronnie Brown and shows signs of wearing down. Veteran Michael Pittman proved valuable, rushing for 86 yards and a touchdown in one of his two starts. Fullback Mike Alstott was brought back with a 1-year, $1.5-million deal, but his skills as a rusher have eroded. Reliable Earnest Graham still is waiting his turn.



Receivers At 35, Joey Galloway is coming off back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons, which is quite a trick given the revolving door at quarterback. On the other hand, Michael Clayton is starting to look like a bust. After leading all rookies with 80 catches and seven TDs in 2004, he has 65 catches and one TD the last two seasons. Maurice Stovall showed flashes when he started the final two games. Stovall shows ability to gain yards after the catch and is a physical blocker. The rest, like veteran Ike Hilliard, are there in case of emergency. How long Galloway can keep putting up numbers is anyone's guess, but he's going to need help. Clayton rededicated himself to training during the offseason and vowed to repeat the production of his rookie year. Tight ends Alex Smith and Jerramy Stevens, a free agent from Seattle, both are receivers in big bodies.

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE BUCCANEERS

The Bucs were a mess last season, their worst since 1991 when they went 3–13. The reason for the collapse was twofold: quarterback Chris Simms suffered a season-ending spleen injury and the defense got old all at once. Having allowed Brian Griese to leave via free agency to the Bears, the Bucs didn't properly address the backup quarterback situation. Simms struggled from the outset, going 0–3 with one touchdown and seven interceptions before checking out. Tampa Bay didn't have much faith in veteran backup Tim Rattay, so Jon Gruden decided to turn over the job to rookie Bruce Gradkowski. The sixth-round pick from Toledo wasn't ready and struggled during his 11 starts. Meanwhile, the defense fell apart. Defensive end Simeon Rice underwent season-ending shoulder surgery after producing two sacks in eight games. Cornerback Brian Kelly was lost early for the year with a turf toe injury. The result was that for the first time since '96, the Bucs defense fell out of the top 10 in the league. Tampa Bay had just 25 sacks, tied for 30th in the NFL. And opposing quarterbacks had a field day, finishing with a 91.0 passer efficiency rating. The Bucs should benefit from a little easier schedule this time around, but four of their first seven games are on the road, beginning with the season opener at Seattle on Sept. 9. A shot at the playoffs is likely still another year away.

2006 Record: 4–12

2007 NFC South Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Seattle	4:15 pm
Sept.	16	New Orleans	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	St. Louis	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at Carolina	4:05 pm
Oct.	7	at Indianapolis	4:05 pm
Oct.	14	Tennessee	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Detroit	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	Jacksonville	4:05 pm
Nov.	4	Arizona	1:00 pm
Week	10	BYE	
Nov.	18	at Atlanta	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	Washington	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at New Orleans	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at Houston	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Atlanta	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at San Francisco	8:15 pm
Dec.	30	Carolina	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Barber, Williams: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

Bucs RB

Cadillac Williams

Derrick Brooks

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Not cutting it Under the direction of head coach Jon Gruden, the Bucs were 29th overall in total offense after averaging 270.1 yards per game. Only three teams were worse — Buffalo, Cleveland and Oakland. More telling, only the Raiders averaged less than the Bucs' 4.4 yards per play. Since arriving in 2002, Gruden's offense has finished ranked 24th, 10th, 22nd, 23rd and 29th in the league. The latest debacle produced the second-lowest scoring team in the NFL.

Parked Cadillac His Rookie of the Year trophy had barely collected dust before Cadillac Williams looked and played like a run-of-the-mill running back. Williams went from 1,178 yards and six touchdowns in 2005 to 798 yards and one touchdown in 2006.

Traveling man The Bucs represent the fourth team in as many years for Eagles free agent Jeff Garcia. At 37, he is expected to be the Bucs' starter. But Garcia's impact could go beyond the field. "It's good for (Chris) Simms, it's great for Simms," Gruden says. "I really believe it's great for all the quarterbacks to have a veteran like Garcia. Garcia is not your everyday veteran. This guy is a madman. He's like Mad Max in the huddle. I think some of our offensive players are in for a culture shock when they get a feel for Garcia."

Offensive Linemen Last year, the Bucs acquired guard Davin Joseph and tackle Jeremy Trueblood. They are both still green but growing. Tampa Bay used its second-round pick in '07 to land left guard Arron Sears. That is proof the Bucs are worried about the knee injury suffered by guard Dan Buenning, who may not be cleared to practice in training camp. Eventually, he will be moved to center. Quarterbacks took too many hits last season even when they weren't getting sacked. It landed Simms in the hospital. The Bucs hoped they've patched it up with Giants free agent left tackle Luke Petitgout.

Defensive Linemen The season started with the Bucs yielding a nine-minute drive to Baltimore and ended the same way against Seattle. In between was some horrendous defensive line play. Simeon Rice had two sacks through eight games before a shoulder injury ended his season. The Bucs finished with 25 sacks, third-fewest in the NFL. Ellis Wyms, Greg Spires and Dewayne White tied for the team lead with five each. White went to Detroit as a free agent, and the Bucs replaced him with Dolphins veteran Kevin Carter, who could be moved to under tackle. Rice's days are numbered, especially since the Bucs used the No. 4 overall pick on Clemson defensive end Gaines Adams. The Bucs also are high on rookie defensive tackle Greg Peterson, who will also play under tackle. The biggest acquisition might be defensive line coach Larry Coyer, who replaces Jethro Franklin after one season.

Linebackers Middle linebacker Shelton Quarles, who will be 36 when the season starts, believes he got a raw deal. He was released for failing a physical, but that's just part of the story. The Bucs want to make room for Barrett Ruud, the second-round pick from Nebraska two years ago. Ruud doesn't excel in coverage, but no worries. The Bucs attracted Colts free agent linebacker Cato June. He is probably the eventual successor to Derrick Brooks at weak-side linebacker. But the Godfather isn't ready for the gold watch. Tampa Bay is high on rookie Quincy Black, a big hitter from the University of New Mexico. Ryan Nece returns to special teams duty with the addition of June at strong-side linebacker. Also look for June and Brooks to remain on the field during passing downs.

Defensive Backs Opposing quarterbacks had their best days against the Bucs. With no pressure, they picked apart the secondary to the tune of a combined 91.0 passer efficiency rating. Tampa Bay totaled only 11 interceptions. That was enough to get defensive backs coach Greg Burns fired after one season. Cornerback Brian Kelly played in two games before having to shut it down with a turf toe injury. Cornerback Ronde Barber was the only Bucs player selected to the Pro Bowl, mostly on the strength of his reputation and two INTs returned for touchdowns against the Eagles. Safeties Jermaine Phillips and Will Allen were liabilities, especially early in the season. The Bucs believe the return of defensive backs coach Raheem Morris will erase the mistakes. Morris has some talent to work with. The Bucs re-signed Phillip Buchanon as an unrestricted free agent and Alan Zemaitis, last year's fourth rounder, has yet to be active in a game. Tampa Bay added reinforcements in the draft with Oregon State safety Sabby Piscitelli and Syracuse safety Tanard Jackson.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Joey Galloway, WR
Modest stats last season, but he also had a rookie at quarterback for 11 games.
Cadillac Williams, RB
Injuries on the offensive line and problems at quarterback can be cited for his problems last season, but he'll be on a shorter leash in '07.

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Specialists Josh Bidwell, the Pro Bowl punter a year ago, was a busy man. He averaged 43.5 on 93 punts. At least the Bucs have settled on a reliable field goal kicker. Matt Bryant was 17-of-22 on field goal attempts, including a game winning 62-yarder on the final play against the Eagles. What the Bucs lack is a kick returner. Pittman was a steady if unspectacular solution who averaged 22.2 with a long of 37.

Coaching Staff Gruden went looking for heads to roll following the Buccaneers' painful 4–12 season and found them in first-year defensive line coach Franklin and defensive backs coach Burns. He replaced them with Coyer, who will coach the defensive line, and Morris, who is back from a one-year stint at Kansas State as the Wildcats' defensive coordinator. The Bucs also will miss linebackers coach Joe Barry, who joined his father-in-law, Rod Marinelli, as defensive coordinator of the Detroit Lions. Unfortunately, there were no changes on the offensive staff. Gruden calls the plays, and so far, he doesn't feel like firing himself.

Brooks, Galloway: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
7	Garcia, Jeff	QB	6'1"	200	8	San Jose State	FA-Phi-07
5	Gradkowski, Bruce	QB	6'1"	220	1	Toledo	D6a-06
12	McCown, Luke	QB	6'3"	212	3	Louisiana Tech	T-Cle-05
2	Simms, Chris	QB	6'4"	220	4	Texas	D3-03
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
40	Alstott, Mike	FB	6'1"	248	11	Purdue	D2-96
35	Askew, B.J.	FB	6'3"	233	4	Michigan	FA-NYJ-07
28	Gates, Lionel	RB	6'0"	223	2	Louisville	FA-06
44	Goldsberry, Jon	FB	6'1"	246	2	Purdue	FA-06
34	Graham, Earnest	RB	5'9"	225	3	Florida	FA-03
32	Pittman, Michael	RB	6'0"	228	9	Fresno State	FA-Ari-02
24	Williams, Cadillac	RB	5'11"	217	2	Auburn	D1-05
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
88	Becht, Anthony	TE	6'5"	272	7	West Virginia	FA-NYJ-05
80	Clayton, Michael	WR	6'4"	215	3	LSU	D1-04
84	Galloway, Joey	WR	5'11"	197	12	Ohio State	T-Dal-04
18	Gessner, Chas	WR	6'4"	215	1	Brown	FA-06
87	Heinrich, Keith	TE	6'5"	250	5	Sam Houston	FA-06
19	Hilliard, Ike	WR	5'11"	210	10	Florida	FA-NYG-05
89	Jones, Mark	WR	5'9"	185	3	Tennessee	FA-05
15	Lucas, Chad	WR	6'1"	201	1	Alabama State	FA-06
81	Smith, Alex	TE	6'4"	258	2	Stanford	D3a-05
85	Stovall, Maurice	WR	6'5"	220	1	Notre Dame	D3-06
86	Stevens, Jerramy	TE	6'7"	260	5	Washington	FA-Sea-07
82	Warren, Paris	WR	6'0"	213	2	Utah	D7b-05
45	Williams, T.J.	TE	6'3"	258	1	NC State	D6b-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
72	Buenning, Dan	G/C	6'4"	320	2	Wisconsin	D4-05
62	Clinkscale, Jonathan	G/C	6'2"	315	1	Wisconsin	FA-05
69	Davis, Anthony	T	6'4"	322	3	Virginia Tech	FA-03
75	Joseph, Davin	G	6'3"	313	1	Oklahoma	D1-06
66	Mihlhauser, Nick	C	6'3"	305	1	Washington State	FA-06
70	Penn, Donald	T	6'5"	305	1	Utah State	FA-06
79	Petitgout, Luke	T	6'6"	308	8	Notre Dame	FA-NYG-07
68	Roland, Dennis	T	6'9"	325	1	Georgia	FA-06
77	Terry, Jeb	G	6'5"	311	3	North Carolina	D5-04
65	Trueblood, Jeremy	T	6'8"	320	1	Boston College	D2-06
76	Wade, John	C	6'5"	299	9	Marshall	FA-Jac-03
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
92	Bennett, Charles	DE	6'3"	254	1	Clemson	D7a-06
60	Campbell, Darrell	DT	6'4"	295	1	Notre Dame	FA-06
93	Carter, Kevin	DE	6'6"	305	12	Florida	FA-Mia-07
71	Haye, Jovan	DT	6'2"	295	2	Vanderbilt	FA-06
95	Hovan, Chris	DT	6'2"	296	7	Boston College	FA-Min-05
91	Jenkins, Julian	DL	6'3"	277	1	Stanford	D5-06
97	Rice, Simeon	DE	6'5"	268	11	Illinois	FA-Ari-01
90	Sims, Ryan	DT	6'4"	315	5	North Carolina	T-KC-07
94	Spires, Greg	DE	6'1"	265	9	Florida State	FA-Cle-02
96	Wyms, Ellis	DT	6'3"	290	6	Mississippi State	D6b-01
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
55	Brooks, Derrick	LB	6'0"	235	12	Florida State	D1b-95
52	Cash, Antoine	LB	6'1"	223	1	Southern Miss	FA-05
54	Chukwurah, Patrick	LB	6'1"	250	6	Wyoming	FA-Den-07
59	June, Cato	LB	6'0"	227	4	Michigan	FA-Ind-07
56	Nece, Ryan	LB	6'3"	224	5	UCLA	FA-02
51	Ruud, Barrett	LB	6'2"	241	2	Nebraska	D2-05
50	Winborn, Jamie	LB	5'11"	242	6	Vanderbilt	FA-Jac-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
46	Adams, Blue	CB/S	5'10"	184	3	Cincinnati	FA-05
26	Allen, Will	S	6'1"	200	3	Ohio State	D4-04
20	Barber, Ronde	CB	5'10"	184	10	Virginia	D3b-97
31	Buchanon, Phillip	CB	5'11"	186	5	Miami	FA-Hou-06
27	Cox, Torrie	CB	5'10"	181	4	Pittsburgh	D6-03
31	Davis, Sammy	CB	6'1"	195	4	Texas A&M	FA-SF-07
25	Kelly, Brian	CB	5'11"	193	9	USC	D2b-98
30	Nicholson, Donte	S	6'1"	216	2	Oklahoma	D5a-05
39	Pearson, Kalvin	S	5'10"	190	2	Grambling	FA-04
23	Phillips, Jermaine	S	6'1"	214	5	Georgia	D5-02
29	Zemaitis, Alan	CB	6'2"	200	1	Penn State	D4-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
9	Bidwell, Josh	P	6'3"	220	7	Oregon	FA-GB-04
3	Bryant, Matt	K	5'9"	200	5	Baylor	FA-NYG-05
48	Economos, Andrew	LS	6'1"	250	1	Georgia Tech	FA-06

Head Coach: Jon Gruden (77–67, 5–3 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Bill Muir
Defensive Coordinator: Monte Kiffin

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	80	Michael Clayton
WR	84	Joey Galloway
LT	**79**	**Luke Petitgout**
LG	**67**	**Arron Sears**
C	76	John Wade
RG	75	Davin Joseph
RT	65	Jeremy Trueblood
TE	81	Alex Smith
QB	**7**	**Jeff Garcia**
FB	40	Mike Alstott
RB	24	Cadillac Williams

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	**93**	**Kevin Carter**
NT	95	Chris Hovan
UT	98	Ryan Sims
DE	97	Simeon Rice
SLB	**59**	**Cato June**
MLB	51	Barrett Ruud
WLB	55	Derrick Brooks
CB	25	Brian Kelly
CB	20	Ronde Barber
SS	23	Jermaine Phillips
FS	26	Will Allen

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	3	Matt Bryant
P	9	Josh Bidwell

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	2	Chris Simms
RB	32	Michael Pittman
WR	85	Maurice Stovall
DE	94	Greg Spires
LB	56	Ryan Nece

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Raymond James Stadium
(65,657) • Surface: Grass
www.buccaneers.com
Ticket Info: 813-879-2827
Training Camp: Disney (Orlando, Fla.)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

DE	Kevin Carter (Mia)
QB	Jeff Garcia (Phi)
LB	Cato June (Ind)
LT	Jeff Petitgout (NYG)
TE	Jerramy Stevens (Sea)

Key Losses

G/C	Sean Mahan (Pit)
LB	Shelton Quarles (FA)
DE	Dewayne White (Det)

2007 Draft

1.	Gaines Adams	DE	6'5"	260	Clemson
2.	Arron Sears	T	6'4"	328	Tennessee
2.	Sabby Piscitelli	SS	6'3"	224	Oregon State
3.	Quincy Black	OLB	6'2"	240	New Mexico
4.	Tanard Jackson	CB	6'0"	192	Syracuse
5.	Greg Peterson	DT	6'5"	286	NC Central
6.	Adam Hayward	OLB	6'0"	235	Portland State
7.	Chris Denman	T	6'6"	315	Fresno State
7.	Marcus Hamilton	CB	5'11"	186	Virginia
7.	Kenneth Darby	RB	5'10"	213	Alabama

The Bucs focused on the quarterback position, extending the contract of Simms, signing Garcia as a free agent, and trading for the rights to Jake Plummer, who maintains he will remain retired. Another priority was finding a proven left tackle, and they did that by signing Petitgout, who was released by the Giants. Defensively, June will start at the strong-side linebacker position and provides speed and coverage abilities. Quarles, a long-time starter at middle linebacker, was released for failing a physical. He will be replaced by third year pro Barrett Ruud, who started five games last season. In the draft, the Bucs took at least one defensive player in every round, beginning with No. 4 overall pick Adams. They would've liked to add an offensive weapon or two, but will most likely have to go with what they have.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Bruce Gradkowski	328	177	1,661	9	9
Tim Rattay*	101	61	748	4	2
Chris Simms	106	58	585	1	7

Rushing	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Cadillac Williams	225	798	3.5	1
Michael Pittman	50	245	4.9	1

Receiving	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Joey Galloway	62	1,057	17.0	7
Michael Pittman	47	405	8.6	0
Alex Smith	35	250	7.1	3

Kicking: Matt Bryant, 17-22 FGs, 22-23 XPs, 73 points
Tackles: Derrick Brooks, 121; Jermaine Phillips, 104; Shelton Quarles*, 104
Sacks: Three players tied with 5
Interceptions: Ronde Barber, 3; Derrick Brooks, 3
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (4–12)

Sept.	10	Baltimore	L	0–27
Sept.	17	at Atlanta	L	3–14
Sept.	24	Carolina	L	24–26
Oct.	8	at New Orleans	L	21–24
Oct.	15	Cincinnati	W	14–13
Oct.	22	Philadelphia	W	23–21
Oct.	29	at N.Y. Giants	L	3–17
Nov.	5	New Orleans	L	14–31
Nov.	13	at Carolina	L	10–24
Nov.	19	Washington	W	20–17
Nov.	23	at Dallas	L	10–38
Dec.	3	at Pittsburgh	L	3–20
Dec.	10	Atlanta	L	6–17
Dec.	17	at Chicago (OT)	L	31–34
Dec.	24	at Cleveland	W	22– 7
Dec.	31	Seattle	L	7–23

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	270.1	29	-52.0
Rushing	95.2	28	-22.1
Passing	174.9	26	-29.9
Scoring	13.2	31	-7.5
Punt Returns	6.5	30	-2.2
Kick Returns	21.4	25	-1.1
Red Zone TD %	43.2	25	-7.6
Defense			
Total Defense	329.4	17	+7.3
Against Rush	119.8	17	+2.5
Against Pass	209.6	19	+4.8
Points Allowed	22.1	21	+1.4
Interceptions	11	28T	-5.3
Sacks	25	30T	-11.3
Turnover Diff.	-12	30	-

CARDINALS

The Cardinals have a new coach — again, which is not surprising. The firing of Dennis Green — and the hiring of Ken Whisenhunt — was inevitable once the Cardinals lost eight straight in 2006 after a season-opening win stoked already sky-high expectations. Green was never a good fit, and he ended his three-year tenure with a 16–32 record. And with apologies to Green's infamous rant, the Cardinals are what we thought they would be.

So now Whisenhunt, the former Steelers offensive coordinator, is charged with taking this team to the next level. But unlike Green, who came into Arizona predicting 10-win seasons and playoff berths, Whisenhunt has promised smart and physical football — but nothing more.

"(Turning it around) could be as simple as one or two players," Whisenhunt says. "It could be as simple as how we (new coaches) do things. You can't put a timetable on it."

Quarterbacks The Cardinals had been thrilled when Matt Leinart fell to them with the 10th pick of the 2006 draft. One of the benefits of a season gone south, like the one the team endured last year, was that Leinart was thrust into the lineup, gathering experience for this season. Leinart went 4–7 as a starter, with the Cardinals choking away wins in his first two starts against the Chiefs and Bears. He had a pedestrian 74.0 quarterback rating but showed he has the chance to be a very good quarterback in the NFL. His arm strength, once questioned, was strong enough, and he showed an intelligence that Whisenhunt has already praised. He also has been committed this offseason, showing up to all the voluntary work and emphasizing he is ready to be the leader in his second season. It will help that Leinart's backup remains Kurt Warner, after Warner briefly thought about retiring knowing he would be second-string after Leinart's ascension. Warner played well in relief of an injured Leinart in the final two games, and his 89.3 rating showed he can still power the offense if Leinart goes down.

Running Backs It wasn't Edgerrin James' best year, but running behind an offensive line in chaos does that to a back. In one loss to Minnesota, James had only four carries while the Cards had six total. The running game was too often an afterthought. But James came on late in the season and he still gained 1,159 yards (on 337 carries). He insisted early this offseason he is primed for a major season in 2007, which would dovetail with Whisenhunt's declaration that Arizona will run the ball often, hopefully 500 times. If the Cards can run that often, backup Marcel Shipp is expected to get much more than the 17 carries (for 41 yards) he got in 2006. Whisenhunt doesn't want James to wear down, and Shipp, who re-signed after Whisenhunt told him he should see more carries, can be effective. Third-stringer J.J. Arrington is morphing into a draft bust and will have to work hard to make the team. Huge fullback Terrelle Smith is the blocker in the backfield Whisenhunt needs.

Anquan Boldin

Receivers The wideout position remains the Cardinals' strength, since they still have a couple of Pro Bowl guys in Anquan Boldin (83 catches for 1,203 yards) and Larry Fitzgerald (69 catches for 946 yards in a season when he was plagued by injury). Boldin especially should flourish with Whisenhunt, given Boldin's comparisons to Pittsburgh's Hines Ward. Third wideout Bryant Johnson heads into the final year of his contract having had too many key drops last season. His production will likely go down as the Cards use a fullback and run the ball more often. Tight end could be an issue. Second-year man Leonard Pope remains raw and lacking in blocking fundamentals, something necessary in the new offense. The Cardinals are still looking for a second tight end they can count on, after missing out on Cincinnati's Reggie Kelly in free agency.

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE CARDINALS

The Cardinals are starting over again, this time with new coach Ken Whisenhunt. Gone are the growing expectations that surrounded the team the past couple of seasons, when they were often a chic playoff pick. They have pieces in place for success. The optimist will look to the three games the Cardinals blew by a combined six points that would have made their record 8–8 last season, a record that would have put them in NFC playoff contention. They have a star-in-the-making at quarterback (Matt Leinart), a workhorse running back (Edgerrin James) and Pro Bowl receivers (Larry Fitzgerald and Anquan Boldin). But they are also going through a transition with Whisenhunt, to a team that will run more often and play a different style of defense. Besides, the offensive line is getting revamped once again, and the team will be likely count on a rookie tackle — Levi Brown — to protect Leinart's blindside. The Cardinals are also playing in a division where Seattle still rules and San Francisco has improved. A schedule that features games against both those teams to start the season — plus an emotional fourth game in Glendale against Whisenhunt's former team, the Steelers — will likely determine the course of Whisenhunt's maiden voyage. But the bar isn't set very high in Arizona, not with a franchise that has made it to .500 just twice in the 19 seasons since moving to the desert.

2006 Record: 5–11

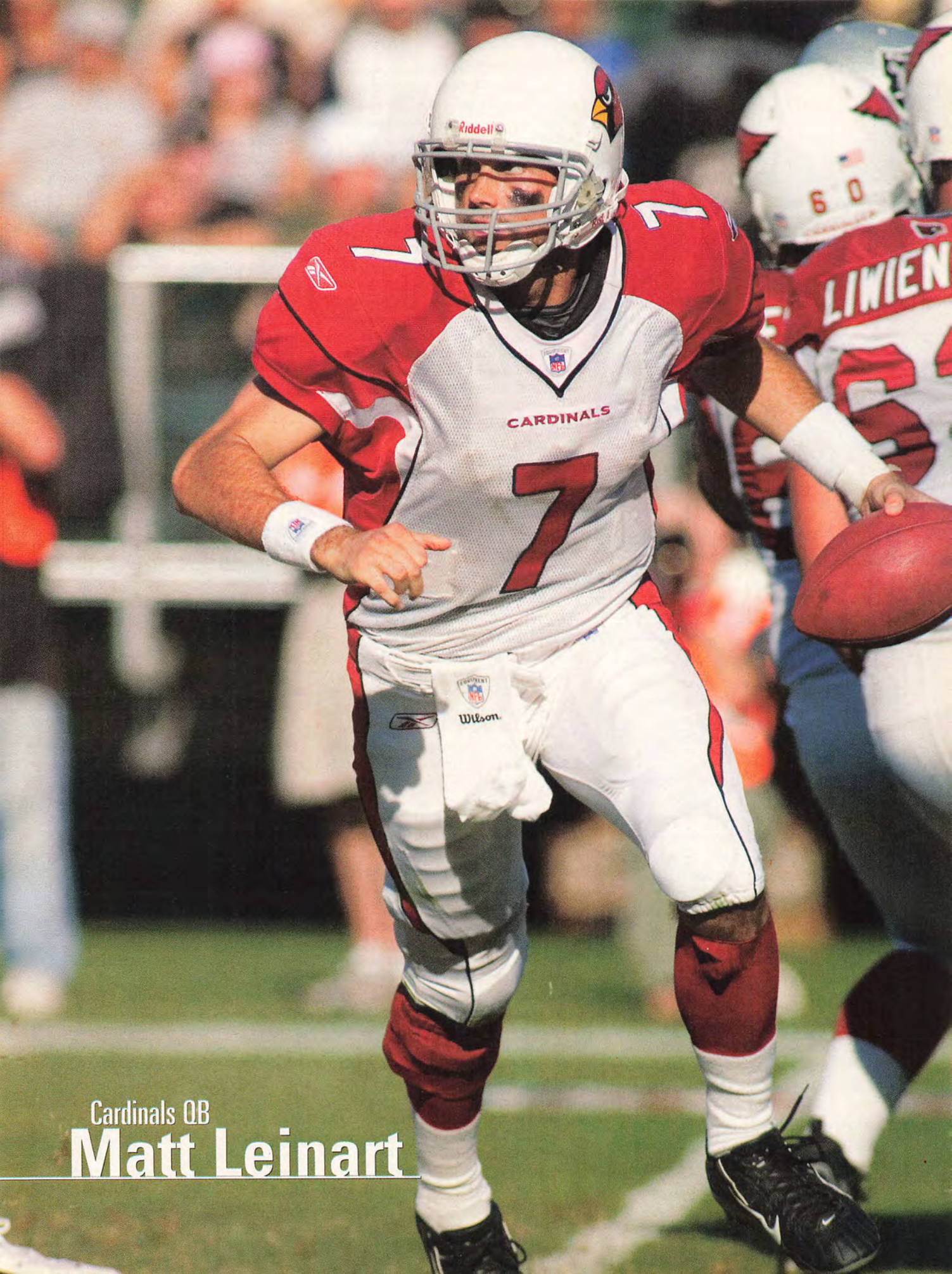
2007 NFC West Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept. 10	at San Francisco	10:15 pm
Sept. 16	Seattle	4:05 pm
Sept. 23	at Baltimore	1:00 pm
Sept. 30	Pittsburgh	4:15 pm
Oct. 7	at St. Louis	1:00 pm
Oct. 14	Carolina	4:05 pm
Oct. 21	at Washington	1:00 pm
Week 8	BYE	
Nov. 4	at Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Nov. 11	Detroit	4:15 pm
Nov. 18	at Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Nov. 25	San Francisco	4:05 pm
Dec. 2	Cleveland	4:05 pm
Dec. 9	at Seattle	4:05 pm
Dec. 16	at New Orleans	1:00 pm
Dec. 23	Atlanta	4:05 pm
Dec. 30	St. Louis	4:15 pm

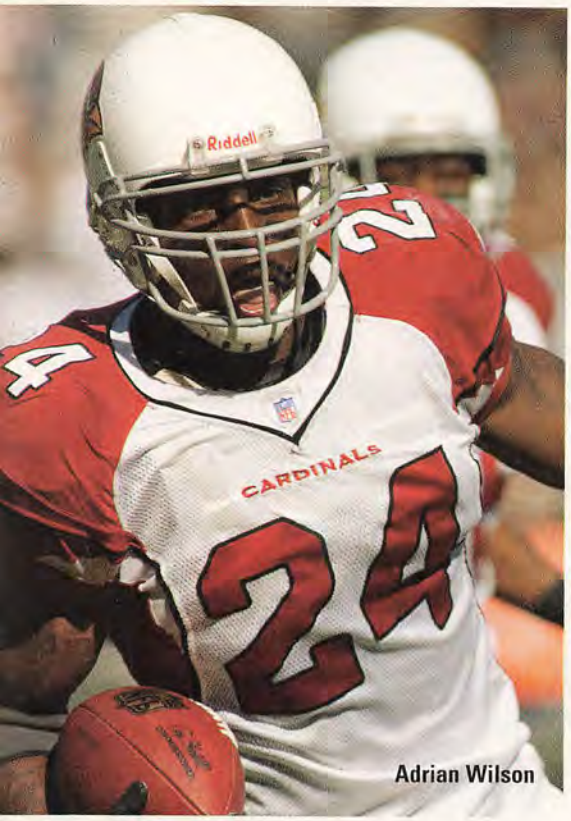
All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Boldin, Leinart: Peter Brouillet



Cardinals QB

Matt Leinart



Adrian Wilson

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

The future of No. 7 Looking confident and full of potential as a rookie, quarterback Matt Leinart set the franchise rookie record for passing yards (2,547), topping that of the team's previous "franchise" quarterback, Jake Plummer (2,203 in 1997).

Running on the Edge Despite having a down season by his standards, running back Edgerrin James' first season in the desert was still productive. The Edge smashed the Cardinals' franchise record for rushing yards in a season since the team moved to Arizona, gaining 1,159 yards (although he gained only 3.4 yards a carry). The previous high was the 1,070 Garrison Hearst gained in 1995.

They have a chance Don't be surprised at any late-round draft picks or undrafted free agents who make the roster this season. Coach Ken Whisenhunt was himself a fringe draftee, a 12th-round pick of Atlanta back in 1985, but fought his way onto the roster and enjoyed a nine-season NFL career.

For what it's worth While their 5–11 record relegated the Cardinals to the bottom of the NFC West standings, the Cards finished with the best record within the division, going 4–2 against their West brethren.

Offensive Linemen The line was a point of emphasis for Whisenhunt, who got the Cards to spend more than $1 million in salary for assistant head coach Russ Grimm so the former Pro Bowl lineman could also guide the Cards' line. Arizona let tackle Leonard Davis go, unwilling to pay him a huge contract for what they saw was average production. With the fifth overall pick, the Cards drafted tackle Levi Brown, and he will likely play the right side. Center Al Johnson was signed in free agency. Holdover Reggie Wells, who played well at right tackle at the end of the year, has been moved to left guard, while second-year man Deuce Lutui remains at right guard. The left tackle will be Oliver Ross, who has underachieved since leaving Grimm and Whisenhunt in Pittsburgh two seasons ago, or free agent signee Mike Gandy. The loser between Ross and Gandy will come off the bench, as will underrated center Nick Leckey.

Defensive Linemen Defensively, the Cardinals are undergoing a transition under the new staff. While Whisenhunt insists the base defense will remain a 4-3, the team has been working players in 3-4 alignments in the offseason, and the defense will use both schemes at times. That means Darnell Dockett, a tackle in college and thus far in the NFL, has been working as a 3-4 defensive end. Veteran Kendrick Clancy and draft pick Alan Branch will be the nose tackle candidates, although both could play in 4-3 setups. Branch could also trump Antonio Smith as the other defensive end if the team uses a 3-4. Meanwhile, holdover defensive ends Bertrand Berry, Chike Okeafor and Calvin Pace will sometimes be used with a hand down as ends and sometimes standing up as outside linebackers. The transition figures to be most difficult for Berry, who was a Pro Bowl end in 2004 and is coming off his second straight season in which an injury kept him out the second half of the schedule.

Linebackers The team was pleased enough with inside linebacker Gerald Hayes last year to give him a five-year contract extension, something that fellow inside man (in a 3-4 setup) Karlos Dansby should end up with at some point in 2007. Hayes was steady, while Dansby has the ability to make big plays both in the rush and in coverage — as long as he stays healthy. If Arizona goes to a 3-4, they have Berry, Okeafor and Pace to play outside. Pace, heading into the last year of his contract, played a chunk of the season last year at linebacker in a 4-3 until Berry got hurt. Depth is a problem; draftee Buster Davis could help and veteran Monty Beisel re-signed. Otherwise, the team needs more productive bodies.

Defensive Backs Strong safety Adrian Wilson, with four interceptions and five sacks, finally got the Pro Bowl recognition he had craved for so long. The rest of the defensive backfield has questions, however. Free agent Terrence Holt, a college teammate of Wilson's, was signed to play free safety, while up-and-coming Aaron Francisco will play a key role both on special teams and in the Cards' three-safety defensive alignments. Former first-round draft pick Antrel Rolle struggled mightily in his second season, as did fellow 2005 draft pick Eric Green. But both suffered from poor position coaching and will have a chance to rebound with a new staff. Green must hold off free agent signee Roderick Hood. Whoever doesn't win the starting job should still see significant playing time.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Edgerrin James, RB
Look for an upswing in James' numbers this season as the Cardinals build a better offensive line.

Larry Fitzgerald, WR
His stats should be on the rise this season with a more seasoned quarterback in Matt Leinart.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists Kicker Neil Rackers had a good year statistically (28-of-37 FGs, 116 points) but missed six of seven from 50 yards and blew key field goals against the Chiefs and Bears that would have either tied or won those games. So in the offseason he lost 18 pounds and built muscle, rededicating himself to repeat his Pro Bowl year of 2005. Punter Scott Player is not spectacular but steady (44.9 average). The Cards drafted Steve Breaston to return kicks and punts.

Coaching Staff Whisenhunt brought a stabilizing influence as soon has he was hired, and his moves thus far back up his talk of making the team more physical. His offensive coordinator is former Cowboys receivers coach Todd Haley, but Whisenhunt has already said he plans to call the plays. That's no surprise, since Whisenhunt had been doing the same thing as an offensive coordinator in Pittsburgh. Whisenhunt chose to keep defensive coordinator Clancy Pendergast, partly due to Pendergast's creative ability to scheme. The decision to use some 3-4 with the 4-3 should play into Pendergast's strengths.

Wilson: Peter Brouillet; Fitzgerald: Rob Tringali/Sportschrome

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
9	Boyd, Shane	QB	6'1"	232	1	Kentucky	FA-06
7	Leinart, Matt	QB	6'5"	230	1	USC	D1-06
13	Warner, Kurt	QB	6'2"	222	9	Northern Iowa	FA-NYG-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
28	Arrington, J.J.	RB	5'9"	218	2	California	D2-05
30	Ayanbadejo, Obafemi	FB	6'2"	230	8	San Diego State	FA-Mia-04
39	Bronson, John	FB	6'3"	275	2	Penn State	FA-05
32	James, Edgerrin	RB	6'0"	220	8	Miami	FA-Ind-06
45	Robinson, Roger	RB	5'10"	199	1	Northern Arizona	FA-06
44	Schable, A.J.	FB	6'3"	281	1	South Dakota	FA-06
31	Shipp, Marcel	RB	5'11"	232	6	Massachusetts	FA-01
42	Smith, Terrelle	FB	6'0"	246	7	Arizona State	FA-Cle-07
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
89	Bergen, Adam	TE	6'4"	267	2	Lehigh	FA-05
81	Boldin, Anquan	WR	6'1"	223	4	Florida State	D2-03
11	Fitzgerald, Larry	WR	6'3"	226	3	Pittsburgh	D1-04
80	Johnson, Bryant	WR	6'3"	216	4	Penn State	D1a-03
84	Lee, Greg	WR	6'1"	201	1	Pittsburgh	FA-06
19	McCoy, LeRon	WR	6'1"	219	2	Indiana (PA)	D7-05
82	Pope, Leonard	TE	6'8"	265	1	Georgia	D3-06
5	Spurlock, Micheal	WR	5'10"	214	1	Ole Miss	FA-06
86	Walters, Troy	WR	5'8"	171	7	Stanford	FA-Ind-06
14	Watkins, Todd	WR	6'2"	191	1	BYU	FA-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
61	Brown, Elton	G	6'5"	340	2	Virginia	D4-05
67	Brown, Milford	G	6'5"	330	5	Florida State	FA-Hou-06
69	Gandy, Mike	T	6'4"	310	5	Notre Dame	FA-Buf-07
72	Gorin, Brandon	T	6'6"	308	5	Purdue	T-NE-06
50	Johnson, Al	C	6'5"	311	3	Wisconsin	FA-Dal-07
60	Leckey, Nick	C	6'3"	291	3	Kansas State	D6-04
63	Liwienski, Chris	G/T	6'5"	325	8	Indiana	FA-Min-06
76	Lutui, Deuce	G	6'4"	338	1	USC	D2-06
79	Ross, Oliver	T	6'4"	327	8	Iowa State	FA-Pit-05
74	Wells, Reggie	G/T	6'4"	318	4	Clarion	D6a-03
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
92	Berry, Bertrand	DE/OLB	6'3"	270	9	Notre Dame	FA-Den-05
70	Clancy, Kendrick	DT	6'1"	305	7	Ole Miss	FA-NYG-06
93	Cooper, Chris	DL	6'5"	285	5	Nebraska-Omaha	FA-06
90	Dockett, Darnell	DE/DT	6'4"	290	3	Florida State	D3-04
95	Lewis, Jonathan	DT	6'1"	312	1	Virginia Tech	D6-06
56	Okeafor, Chike	DE/OLB	6'5"	265	8	Purdue	FA-Sea-05
94	Smith, Antonio	DE	6'4"	280	3	Oklahoma State	D5-04
98	Watson, Gabe	DT	6'3"	340	1	Michigan	D4-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
52	Beisel, Monty	MLB	6'3"	240	6	Kansas State	FA-06
55	Blackstock, Darryl	OLB	6'3"	240	2	Virginia	D3b-05
58	Dansby, Karlos	OLB	6'4"	240	3	Auburn	D2-04
51	Darling, James	LB	6'1"	245	10	Washington State	FA-Phi-03
54	Hayes, Gerald	MLB	6'1"	253	4	Pittsburgh	D3-03
57	Huff, Orlando	OLB	6'3"	236	6	Fresno State	FA-Sea-05
59	Johnson, Brandon	OLB	6'5"	224	1	Louisville	D5-06
53	Keys, Isaac	LB	6'3"	243	4	Morehouse	FA-06
97	Pace, Calvin	DE/OLB	6'4"	272	4	Wake Forest	D1b-03
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
41	Brewer, Jack	S	6'0"	194	5	Minnesota	FA-Phi-06
47	Francisco, Aaron	FS	6'2"	212	2	BYU	FA-05
25	Green, Eric	CB	5'11"	194	2	Virginia Tech	D3a-05
34	Griffith, Robert	FS	6'0"	202	13	San Diego State	FA-Cle-05
42	Holt, Terrence	S	6'2"	208	4	NC State	FA-Det-07
	Hood, Roderick	CB	5'11"	196	4	Auburn	FA-Phi-07
23	Hunter, Darrell	CB	6'1"	206	1	Miami (OH)	FA-06
37	Milligan, Hanik	SS	6'3"	200	4	Houston	W-SD-06
21	Rolle, Antrel	CB	6'0"	208	2	Miami	D1-05
26	Tate, Robert	CB	5'11"	194	9	Cincinnati	FA-05
22	Ware, Matt	CB	6'2"	210	3	UCLA	W-Phi-06
24	Wilson, Adrian	SS	6'3"	230	6	NC State	D3-01
29	Wyatt, Justin	CB	5'9"	193	1	USC	FA-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
48	Hodel, Nathan	LS	6'2"	242	5	Illinois	FA-01
10	Player, Scott	P	6'1"	206	9	Florida State	FA-98
1	Rackers, Neil	K	6'1"	212	7	Illinois	FA-03

Head Coach: Ken Whisenhunt (First season)
Offensive Coordinator: Todd Haley
Defensive Coordinator: Clancy Pendergast

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	81	Anquan Boldin
WR	11	Larry Fitzgerald
LT	79	Oliver Ross
LG	74	Reggie Wells
C	**50**	**Al Johnson**
RG	76	Deuce Lutui
RT	**75**	**Levi Brown**
QB	7	Matt Leinart
TE	82	Leonard Pope
FB	**45**	**Terrelle Smith**
RB	32	Edgerrin James

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	90	Darnell Dockett
NT	**78**	**Alan Branch**
DE	94	Antonio Smith
OLB	92	Bertrand Berry
ILB	54	Gerald Hayes
ILB	58	Karlos Dansby
OLB	56	Chike Okeafor
CB	21	Antrel Rolle
CB	25	Eric Green
SS	24	Adrian Wilson
FS	**42**	**Terrence Holt**

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	1	Neil Rackers
P	10	Scott Player

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	13	Kurt Warner
T	**69**	**Mike Gandy**
DT	70	Kendrick Clancy
CB		**Roderick Hood**
S	47	Aaron Francisco

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Univ. of Phoenix Stadium (63,400)
Surface: Grass
www.azcardinals.com
Ticket Info: 602-379-0102
Training Camp: Northern Arizona (Flagstaff, AZ)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions:

T	Mike Gandy (Buf)
CB	Roderick Hood (Phi)
S	Terrence Holt (Det)
C	Al Johnson (Dal)
FB	Terrelle Smith (Cle)

Key losses

T	Leonard Davis (Dal)
S	Robert Griffith (fa)
LB	Orlando Huff (fa)

2007 Draft Picks

1.	Levi Brown	T	6'4"	328	Penn State
2.	Alan Branch	DT	6'6"	331	Michigan
3.	Buster Davis	ILB	5'10"	244	Florida State
5.	Steve Breaston	WR	6'0"	178	Michigan
7.	Ben Patrick	TE	6'4"	270	Delaware

The Cardinals didn't have many key losses (the team had no interest in bringing back Griffith or Huff), but when Davis bailed to play close to home in Dallas, the team replaced him with their first-round pick, grabbing Brown from Penn State. The Cards also revamped the offensive line by signing Johnson from Dallas to start at center and brought in Gandy, a tackle who will battle Oliver Ross for the other tackle spot. Smith, a 246-pound fullback, will be the burly blocker coach Ken Whisenhunt wants in the backfield. Holt will be give a starting job at safety opposite Pro Bowler Adrian Wilson in place of Griffith, while Hood should get a shot at starting stardom at cornerback after feeling suffocated in Philadelphia. Branch, a big defensive tackle taken in the second round, will have the early shot to earn a starting job on the defensive line. Breaston, a teammate of Branch's at Michigan, most likely will be given the job of both punt and kickoff returns.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Matt Leinart	377	214	2,547	11	12
Kurt Warner	168	108	1,377	6	5

Rushing	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Edgerrin James	337	1,159	3.4	6
Matt Leinart	22	49	2.2	2
Marcel Shipp	17	41	2.4	4

Receiving	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Anquan Boldin	83	1,203	14.5	4
Larry Fitzgerald	69	946	13.7	6
Bryant Johnson	40	740	18.5	4
Edgerrin James	38	217	5.7	0

Kicking: Neil Rackers, 28-37 FGs, 32-32 XPs, 116 points
Tackles: Gerald Hayes, 93; Antrel Rolle, 84
Sacks: Chike Okeafor, 8.5
Interceptions: Adrian Wilson, 4

2006 RESULTS (5–11)

Sept.	10	San Francisco	W	34–27
Sept.	17	at Seattle	L	10–21
Sept.	24	St. Louis	L	14–16
Oct.	1	at Atlanta	L	10–32
Oct.	8	Kansas City	L	20–23
Oct.	16	Chicago	L	23–24
Oct.	22	at Oakland	L	9–22
Oct.	29	at Green Bay	L	14–31
Nov.	12	Dallas	L	10–27
Nov.	19	Detroit	W	17–10
Nov.	26	at Minnesota	L	26–31
Dec.	3	at St. Louis	W	34–20
Dec.	10	Seattle	W	27–21
Dec.	17	Denver	L	20–37
Dec.	24	at San Francisco	W	26–20
Dec.	31	at San Diego	L	20–27

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	312.5	18	-9.6
Rushing	83.6	30	-33.7
Passing	228.9	10	-24.1
Scoring	19.6	19	-1.1
Punt Returns	10.0	8	+1.3
Kick Returns	22.1	21T	-0.4
Red Zone TD %	46.3	20	-4.5
Defense			
Total Defense	349.4	29	+27.3
Against Rush	118.6	16	+1.3
Against Pass	230.9	30	+26.1
Points Allowed	24.3	29	+3.6
Interceptions	16	17T	-0.3
Sacks	38	12T	+1.7
Turnover Diff.	+3	12	-

49ERS

The San Francisco 49ers defeated the NFC West champions twice last season. Although they seemed to have the Seattle Seahawks' number, they could not finish the job with a division title.

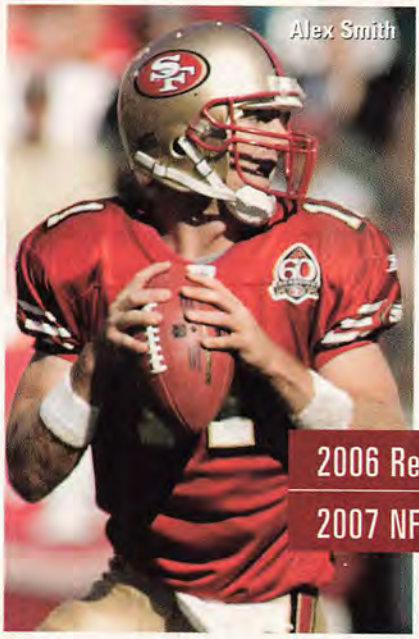
The 49ers spent the first two seasons of the Mike Nolan era building the offense. This offseason, they turned their attention to the defense. After spending nearly $40 million in guaranteed money to add four defensive starters in free agency, the 49ers used six picks to draft players on defense.

After four consecutive losing seasons, the 49ers appear ready to return to the ranks of playoff contenders this season.

Quarterbacks Alex Smith made a remarkable improvement in his second NFL season. He became the first 49ers quarterback in team history to take every snap in a season. In his second campaign, he looked nothing like the player who threw 11 interceptions and one touchdown as a rookie. Smith has won over the locker room as a team leader, despite only turning 23 in May. His production should continue to rise because the 49ers have placed a lot of emphasis on upgrading the talent around him. The 49ers relied on their ground game last season, but the club will lean more on Smith to generate offense with the passing game this season. There are few questions about Smith's athletic ability or his throwing arm. He will be in the same system a second consecutive season, as first-year coordinator Jim Hostler will retain the Don Coryell offense that Norv Turner installed a year ago. Backup quarterback Trent Dilfer did not see any game action in his first season with the 49ers, but he proved his value as Smith's mentor/counselor/motivator/confidante.

Running Backs Nobody was more responsible for the 49ers' surprising 7–9 record a year ago than Frank Gore, who rushed for a team-record 1,695 yards and eight touchdowns. Gore cashed in with a new five-year deal worth approximately $28 million. Gore has set a goal of rushing for 2,200 yards this season, a figure he is not likely to challenge. Nolan says he does not plan for Gore to exceed the 312 carries he piled up a year ago. But in order for Gore to get relief, the 49ers have to find a backup to earn the playing time. Michael Robinson showed some flashes as a rookie who converted full-time to the position after playing quarterback his senior season at Penn State. Fullback Moran Norris, who carried the ball twice last season, plays an important role as Gore's lead blocker.

Receivers The 49ers brought in three new receivers to improve a unit that was a glaring weak point of last season's team. Darrell Jackson moves over from Seattle and could quickly develop into Smith's go-to receiver. In addition, Ashley Lelie signed with the 49ers as a free agent, and the club drafted receiver Jason Hill in the third round. Arnaz Battle, who has developed into a steady target, will be pressed to maintain his starting job. The 49ers cut ties with Antonio Bryant in the offseason. Tight end Vernon Davis, who missed eight starts with a broken leg, gives the 49ers big-play speed. The club spent much of the offseason planning on different ways to get the ball into the hands of the speedy 253-pounder.


Alex Smith

Offensive Linemen Although the line showed marked improvement last season, the 49ers enter the season with some degree of doubt about all five spots. If Jonas Jennings is healthy, he is clearly the starter at left tackle. But Jennings has been plagued by injuries since coming to the 49ers in 2005. He underwent his second offseason shoulder surgery in two years. Center Eric Heitmann played well after inheriting the spot from longtime 49ers mainstay Jeremy Newberry, but Heitmann is battling back from a broken leg suffered late last year. Left guard Larry Allen is nearing the end of his career, but he still played at a high enough level last season to earn his 11th trip to the Pro Bowl. Right guard Justin Smiley and right tackle

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE 49ERS

The 49ers had an opportunity last season to make it into the NFC playoffs, a year ahead of schedule, but faltered with home losses to the Packers and Cardinals. Still the 49ers ended the season on an encouraging note, knocking the Broncos out of the playoffs with a stunning upset in Denver. The nucleus of the 49ers' offense is young, so coach Mike Nolan and personnel chief Scot McCloughan devoted most of their attention to improving the defense. They added five likely starters in the offseason: cornerback Nate Clements, safety Michael Lewis, nose tackle Aubrayo Franklin and linebackers Tully Banta-Cain and rookie Patrick Willis. Quarterback Alex Smith showed his vast promise in his second season after a thoroughly forgettable rookie season. Running back Frank Gore emerged as one of the game's top running backs. The 49ers expect major improvements on both sides of the ball, which might enable them to challenge for the NFC West title. The club has made dramatic improvements since Nolan took over in 2005 after a 2–14 season. After winning four games in Nolan's first season, the Niners improved to seven victories last season. They are definitely set up for another rise in their win total, and their future appears bright with Nolan, McCloughan and a salary-cap situation that has been set up with the intention of keeping the team strong for the long haul.

2006 Record: 7–9

2007 NFC West Prediction: 2nd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	10	Arizona	10:15 pm
Sept.	16	at St. Louis	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	Seattle	4:05 pm
Oct.	7	Baltimore	4:15 pm
Week	6	BYE	
Oct.	21	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	New Orleans	4:15 pm
Nov.	4	at Atlanta	1:00 pm
Nov.	12	at Seattle	8:30 pm
Nov.	18	St. Louis	4:15 pm
Nov.	25	at Arizona	4:05 pm
Dec.	2	at Carolina	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	Minnesota	4:05 pm
Dec.	15	Cincinnati	8:15 pm
Dec.	23	Tampa Bay	8:15 pm
Dec.	30	at Cleveland	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Smith, Gore: Peter Brouillet

49ers RB

Frank Gore

Vernon Davis

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

But coach! Running back Frank Gore did not want to hear about coach Mike Nolan's plan to limit the number of carries from his top back to keep him fresh this season. "But I don't take big hits," Gore argued.

No pressure Cornerback Nate Clements came to the 49ers with an eight-year, $80 million contract, but he says no additional pressure comes along with it. "I don't allow that type of pressure to get to me, especially at the position I play," he says. "There is always going to be that pressure, going up against that No. 1 (receiver). I accept it as another challenge."

Savvy vet Larry Allen is to young offensive linemen what Jerry Rice used to be for wide receivers who came to the 49ers. "I told my dad right after I got picked, I said, 'I'm going to be playing with Larry Allen,'" says offensive tackle Joe Staley after being selected with a first-round pick. "He's one of the guys that I've looked up to forever."

Tricks of the trade The 49ers traded their No. 124 pick in the draft, a fourth-rounder, to acquire receiver Darrell Jackson from the division-rival Seahawks. "If we'd kept the (pick) that we gave them, I don't know that we would've gotten a Darrell Jackson right there," Nolan says. "So I feel good about that."

Kwame Harris have contracts that expire at the end of the season. If the 49ers don't believe they can sign them to extensions, their names are likely to come up in trade talks before the start of the season. Rookie Joe Staley, a first-round draft pick, is likely to challenge Harris for a starting job, while David Baas and Tony Wragge could push Smiley. Adam Snyder is a candidate for increased playing time at either spot on the right side.

Defensive Linemen The shift to a 3-4 defense has brought about a change in the kind of linemen the 49ers are seeking. The 49ers have collected a bunch of players with the size and mentality to perform the dirty work required for that position. Bryant Young is back for another season. He'll have to learn a new trick, as he will get his most exposure to playing in a new scheme. Young is expected to line up at left defensive end. The 49ers hope they have built enough depth to allow Young to be part of a rotation, instead of being forced to play nearly every snap. The key acquisition in the offseason was 320-pound nose tackle Aubrayo Franklin, whose presence allows the 49ers to make the transition full-time to a three-man line. Either fourth-year player Isaac Sopoaga or rookie Joe Cohen has to step forward as a backup. Ronald Fields, Marques Douglas, Melvin Oliver and rookie Ray McDonald also figure into the mix as part of the defensive line rotation.

Linebackers Brandon Moore provided a spark for the 49ers' defense last season when he was inserted into the lineup as an inside linebacker. He led the team with 92 tackles and 6.5 sacks. His spot appears secure. But veteran Derek Smith will be in a battle to hang onto his starting job. Although Patrick Willis was chosen with the No. 11 overall pick, Nolan is reluctant to anoint him the starter ahead of Smith. On the outside, the 49ers have several players on whom they will rely to supply the team with good sack numbers. Free-agent acquisition Tully Banta-Cain comes to the 49ers after spending his first four seasons with the Patriots. Banta-Cain recorded 5.5 sacks last season despite starting only seven games. Manny Lawson, a first-round pick in '06, proved to be a versatile linebacker after making the conversion from defensive end in college. Because of shortcomings elsewhere on defense, Lawson was asked to be an outside linebacker in a 4-3 defense, which meant that he spent most of his time dropping into coverage. With better personnel around him, the 49ers plan to devote Lawson to using his speed to get after the quarterback. Roderick Green and Parys Haralson also have shown pass-rush ability.

Defensive Backs The 49ers upgraded the secondary in free agency with cornerback Nate Clements and strong safety Michael Lewis. Clements, who was made the league's highest-paid defensive player, joins Walt Harris, who made the first Pro Bowl of his 11-year career after a career-high eight interceptions, and backup Shawntae Spencer in giving the 49ers three solid cover men. Lewis teams with Mark Roman at safety. After signing a one-year deal during training camp, Roman played well enough to earn a three-year extension late in the season. Keith Lewis, who brought a hard-hitting mentality to the team while starting nine games, gives the 49ers a reliable backup.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Frank Gore, RB
After a terrific 2006 season, Gore may have risen to top five status among fantasy running backs.
Darrell Jackson, WR
Jackson could lose a little value in this offense, but he's still a solid starting fantasy receiver.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists Punter Andy Lee was retained after the 49ers matched an offer sheet he signed with the Pittsburgh Steelers. In just his third season, Lee had the best season from a 49ers punter in the 36 years the club has played at windy Monster Park (formerly Candlestick Park). Lee averaged 44.8 yards a punt, including a net average of 36.8. Kicker Joe Nedney again turned in a solid season, making 29 of 35 field goals. The 49ers have one of the game's best long-snappers, eighth-year pro Brian Jennings. Punt returner Brandon Williams has sure hands, but the club would like to get more explosive plays from him this season.

Coaching Staff Former Chargers linebackers coach Greg Manusky gets his first opportunity to be a defensive coordinator, as he takes over for Billy Davis, who was fired after two seasons. Nolan hopes to be able to take a step back from running the defense and turn things over to Manusky, a former NFL linebacker and special-teamer. Hostler becomes the 49ers' fifth offensive coordinator in five seasons, as he takes over for Turner, who became Chargers head coach. He'll keep the same system. Nolan feels as if he has surrounded himself with a strong staff, which includes assistant head coach Mike Singletary and receivers coach Jerry Sullivan.

Davis: Peter Brouillet; Jackson: Larry Smith

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
12	Dilfer, Trent	QB	6'4"	234	13	Fresno State	T-Cle-06
13	Hill, Shaun	QB	6'3"	226	5	Maryland	FA-Min-06
11	Smith, Alex	QB	6'4"	210	2	Utah	D1-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
21	Gore, Frank	RB	5'9"	215	2	Miami	D2-05
44	Hetherington, Chris	FB	6'3"	253	11	Yale	FA-05
43	Hicks, Maurice	RB	5'11"	196	3	North Carolina A&T	FA-04
45	Keasey, Zak	FB	6'1"	236	1	Princeton	FA-06
40	Norris, Moran	FB	6'2"	250	6	Kansas	FA-06
24	Robinson, Michael	RB	6'1"	218	1	Penn State	D4-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
47	Bajema, Billy	TE	6'4"	255	2	Oklahoma State	D7d-05
83	Battle, Arnaz	WR	6'1"	206	4	Notre Dame	D6-03
14	Brewer, C.J.	WR	6'2"	205	1	Wyoming	FA-06
85	Davis, Vernon	TE	6'3"	253	1	Maryland	D1a-06
84	Gilmore, Bryan	WR	6'1"	193	6	Midwestern State	FA-Mia-06
88	Jacobs, Taylor	WR	6'1"	202	4	Florida	T-Was-06
82	Jackson, Darrell	WR	6'0"	201	7	Florida	T-Sea-07
87	Lelie, Ashley	WR	6'3"	200	5	Hawaii	FA-Atl-07
19	Maxwell, Marcus	WR	6'4"	205	2	Oregon	D7b-05
46	Walker, Delanie	TE	6'1"	237	1	Central Missouri St.	D6a-06
17	Williams, Brandon	WR	5'11"	175	1	Wisconsin	D3-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
71	Allen, Larry	G	6'3"	325	13	Sonoma State	FA-Dal-06
64	Baas, David	G	6'4"	312	2	Michigan	D2-05
76	Dahl, Harvey	T	6'5"	305	1	Nevada	FA-05
78	Estes, Patrick	T	6'7"	283	2	Virginia	D7c-05
77	Harris, Kwame	T	6'7"	306	4	Stanford	D1-03
66	Heitmann, Eric	C	6'3"	307	5	Stanford	D7a-02
75	Jennings, Jonas	T	6'3"	323	6	Georgia	FA-Buf-05
65	Smiley, Justin	G	6'3"	300	3	Alabama	D2a-04
68	Snyder, Adam	G/T	6'6"	312	2	Oregon	D3b-05
74	Steitz, Nick	G	6'1"	300	1	Oregon	FA-06
67	Washington, Tavares	T	6'3"	320	1	Florida	FA-06
69	Wragge, Tony	G	6'4"	320	2	New Mexico State	FA-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
94	Douglas, Marques	DE	6'2"	286	6	Howard	FA-05
63	Duckett, Damane	DT	6'6"	300	3	East Carolina	FA-NYG-06
93	Fields, Ronald	DT	6'2"	310	2	Mississippi State	D5a-05
92	Franklin, Aubrayo	DT	6'1"	320	4	Tennessee	FA-Bal-07
96	Oliver, Melvin	DE	6'3"	279	1	LSU	D6c-06
90	Sopoaga, Isaac	DT	6'2"	332	3	Hawaii	D4a-04
97	Young, Bryant	DE	6'3"	297	13	Notre Dame	D1-94
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
95	Banta-Cain, Tully	LB	6'2"	250	4	California	FA-NE-07
57	Bockwoldt, Colby	LB	6'2"	237	3	BYU	FA-Ten-07
51	Foreman, Jay	LB	6'1"	240	8	Nebraska	FA-NYG-06
54	Green, Roderick	LB	6'2"	245	3	Central Missouri St.	W-Bal-06
98	Haralson, Parys	DE/LB	6'1"	250	1	Tennessee	D5-06
99	Lawson, Manny	LB	6'5"	240	1	NC State	D1b-06
56	Moore, Brandon	LB	6'1"	246	5	Oklahoma	FA-02
55	Navies, Hannibal	LB	6'3"	252	8	Colorado	FA-Cin-06
	Newberry, Jared	LB	6'1"	238	1	Stanford	FA-06
58	Rabe, Russel	LB	6'2"	228	1	Minnesota-Duluth	FA-06
	Slaughter, T.J.	LB	6'0"	233	7	Southern Miss	FA-NO-06
50	Smith, Derek	LB	6'2"	237	10	Arizona State	FA-01
55	Torrey, Andre	LB	6'4"	245	1	Arizona	FA-06
53	Ulbrich, Jeff	LB	6'0"	240	7	Hawaii	D3b-00
59	Williams, Renauld	LB	6'1"	238	3	Hofstra	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
22	Clements, Nate	CB	6'0"	206	6	Ohio State	FA-Buf-07
27	Harris, Walt	CB	5'11"	192	11	Mississippi State	FA-Was-06
23	Hudson, Marcus	S	6'2"	200	1	NC State	D6b-06
28	Lewis, Keith	S	6'0"	210	3	Oregon	D6b-04
32	Lewis, Michael	SS	6'1"	222	5	Colorado	FA-Phi-07
26	Roman, Mark	S	5'11"	201	7	LSU	FA-GB-06
33	Smith, Harrison	CB	6'2"	199	1	California	FA-06
36	Spencer, Shawntae	CB	6'1"	179	3	Pittsburgh	D2b-04
30	Strickland, Donald	S	5'10"	187	4	Colorado	FA-Phi-06
20	Tucker, B.J.	CB	5'10"	188	2	Wisconsin	FA-05
32	Vaughn, Vickiel	S	6'1"	204	1	Arkansas	D7-06
25	Williams, Chad	S	5'9"	207	5	Southern Miss	FA-Bal-06
29	Wishom, Jerron	CB	6'1"	197	2	Louisiana Tech	FA-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
4	Lee, Andy	P	6'0"	183	3	Pittsburgh	D6a-04
86	Jennings, Brian	LS	6'5"	233	7	Arizona State	D7b-00
6	Nedney, Joe	K	6'5"	235	9	San Jose State	FA-Ten-05

Head Coach: Mike Nolan (11-21, 0-0 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Jim Hostler
Defensive Coordinator: Greg Manusky

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

WR	**18**	**Ashley Lelie**
WR	**82**	**Darrell Jackson**
LT	75	Jonas Jennings
LG	71	Larry Allen
C	66	Eric Heitmann
RG	65	Justin Smiley
RT	**74**	**Joe Staley**
TE	85	Vernon Davis
QB	11	Alex Smith
FB	44	Moran Norris
RB	21	Frank Gore

DEFENSE

DE	97	Bryant Young
NT	**92**	**Aubrayo Franklin**
DE	93	Ronald Fields
OLB	**95**	**Tully Banta-Cain**
ILB	**52**	**Patrick Willis**
ILB	56	Brandon Moore
OLB	99	Manny Lawson
CB	**22**	**Nate Clements**
CB	27	Walt Harris
SS	**32**	**Michael Lewis**
FS	26	Mark Roman

SPECIALISTS

K	6	Joe Nedney
P	4	Andy Lee

KEY RESERVES

QB	12	Trent Dilfer
WR	83	Arnaz Battle
OL	68	Adam Snyder
ILB	50	Derek Smith
CB	36	Shawntae Spencer
S	28	Keith Lewis

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Monster Park Stadium (69,843)
Surface: Grass
Website: www.sf49ers.com
Ticket Info: 415-656-4900
Training Camp: 49ers Complex

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

LB	Tully Banta-Cain	(NE)
LB	Colby Bockwoldt	(Ten)
CB	Nate Clements	(Buf)
NT	Aubrayo Franklin	(Bal)
WR	Darrell Jackson	(Sea)
WR	Ashley Lelie	(Atl)
S	Michael Lewis	(Phi)

Key Losses

DT	Anthony Adams	(Chi)
S	Mike Adams	(Cle)
WR	Antonio Bryant	(FA)
TE	Eric Johnson	(NO)
C	Jeremy Newberry	(Oak)

2007 Draft

1.	Patrick Willis	ILB	6'1"	240	Ole Miss
1.	Joe Staley	T	6'5"	302	Central Michigan
3.	Jason Hill	WR	6'0"	210	Washington State
3.	Ray McDonald	DT	6'3"	281	Florida
4.	Jay Moore	DE	6'5"	276	Nebraska
4.	Dashon Goldson	FS	6'2"	202	Washington
4.	Joe Cohen	DT	6'2"	313	Florida
5.	Tarell Brown	CB	5'11"	192	Texas
6.	Thomas Clayton	RB	5'10"	218	Kansas State

San Francisco took its lumps the past two offseasons while trying to get its cap situation straightened out. The 49ers had nearly $30 million in cap room this year, and they used it to make a big splash with the signings of Clements, Lewis, Franklin, Banta-Cain and Lelie within the first couple days of free agency. Jackson was acquired on a draft-day trade for a fourth-round pick. The 49ers lost no starters through free agency, though they cut Bryant, who had become a disruption. The 49ers used their top draft pick (No. 11) to select Willis, who made a strong impression at the Senior Bowl. They traded up for another first-round pick, selecting Staley, an athletic lineman who figures to be around for a long time.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Alex Smith	442	257	2,890	16	16
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Frank Gore	312	1,695	5.4		8
Alex Smith	44	147	3.3		2
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Antonio Bryant*	40	733	18.3		3
Arnaz Battle	59	686	11.6		3
Frank Gore	61	485	8.0		1
Eric Johnson*	34	292	8.6		2

Kicking: Joe Nedney, 29-35 FGs, 29-29 XPs, 116 points
Tackles: Brandon Moore, 92; Keith Lewis, 76
Sacks: Brandon Moore, 6.5
Interceptions: Walt Harris, 8
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (7–9)

Sept.	10	at Arizona	L	27–34
Sept.	17	St. Louis	W	20–13
Sept.	24	Philadelphia	L	24–38
Oct.	1	at Kansas City	L	0–41
Oct.	8	Oakland	W	34–20
Oct.	15	San Diego	L	19–48
Oct.	29	at Chicago	L	10–41
Nov.	5	Minnesota	W	9– 3
Nov.	12	at Detroit	W	19–13
Nov.	19	Seattle	W	20–14
Nov.	26	at St. Louis	L	17–20
Dec.	3	at New Orleans	L	10–34
Dec.	10	Green Bay	L	19–30
Dec.	14	at Seattle	W	24–14
Dec.	24	Arizona	L	20–26
Dec.	31	at Denver (OT)	W	26–23

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	303.8	26	-18.3
Rushing	135.8	6	+18.5
Passing	168.0	29	-36.8
Scoring	18.6	24	-2.1
Punt Returns	8.5	18T	-0.2
Kick Returns	24.1	4T	+1.6
Red Zone TD %	41.7	29	-9.1
Defense			
Total Defense	344.2	26	+22.1
Against Rush	121.0	19	+3.7
Against Pass	223.2	26	+18.4
Points Allowed	25.8	32	+5.1
Interceptions	14	22T	-2.3
Sacks	34	19T	-2.3
Turnover Diff.	-5	23T	-

SEAHAWKS

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE SEAHAWKS

The Seahawks have claimed the last three NFC West division crowns in relatively unimpeded fashion. The Cards, Rams and 49ers have spent that time upgrading. With the Cardinals and 49ers combining for a 3–1 record against the Seahawks last year, this might finally be the season another team reaches the point of contention. Thus, this is a critical season for the Seahawks. They could blame injuries for dropping back to the pack in 2006, but another season with single-digit victories might fuel suspicions that this team has peaked. The offense will have a hard time regaining the form it showed during the team's Super Bowl season. That standard is unrealistic. Questions on the offensive line could hurt continuity again, particularly if center Chris Spencer has trouble recovering from shoulder surgeries. Former MVP Shaun Alexander's return to form is critical for a balanced attack while Matt Hasselbeck's health is paramount without a veteran backup. Deion Branch must justify his $39 million contract. Clearly the Seattle defense must carry more of the load. Patrick Kerney, Julian Peterson, Lofa Tatupu, Deon Grant and Marcus Trufant must approach their Pro Bowl potential. If all those things happen, the Seahawks can finish their season in Super Bowl XLII. The team should be in the hunt for another division title no matter what.

2006 Record: 9–7

2007 NFC West Prediction: 1st

Seattle's margin for error is shrinking now that longtime NFC West doormats San Francisco and Arizona are worthy opponents. Some might even consider the Seahawks an underdog after the 49ers and Cardinals went 3–1 against them last season.

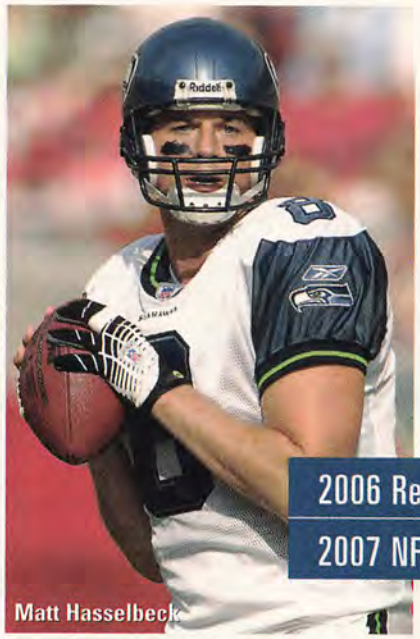
Yes, things are a bit different this time, but the Seahawks still have the veteran experience and talent to emerge with a fourth consecutive NFC West title and fifth consecutive playoff berth. For all the Seahawks' struggles last season, many of them brought on by injuries, the team still took eventual NFC champ Chicago to overtime in a divisional-round game at Soldier Field. There is no question that injuries are the primary concern this season. The offense is getting older, with five projected starters in their 30s. The defense has question marks along the line after Patrick Kerney and Marcus Tubbs underwent offseason surgeries.

A revamped secondary needs to tighten up against the big play, a problem area at times last season. The Seahawks sought to rectify that situation by spending lavishly on free safety Deon Grant, a mainstay in Jacksonville for years. Former Browns safety Brian Russell is also onboard, while former Chicago safety Mike Green appears ready to contribute following surgery.

The defense must tighten up on the back end. The offense must avoid the types of injuries to key players that hurt so much last season. It would help, too, if Seattle's division foes failed to meet expectations.

Quarterbacks Matt Hasselbeck's right knee, left shoulder and left hand are feeling much better. The offense should be, too. The Seahawks' problems on the offensive line took a heavy physical toll on Hasselbeck, who rarely appeared comfortable and suffered through some rocky moments in the team's playoff loss at Chicago. Hasselbeck is a three-time Pro Bowl passer who runs the offense expertly when he isn't worried about defensive linemen and linebackers slamming into his knees. He faces some challenges this season because the team is breaking in a new group of receivers. Those changes might make things a little less natural early on. Seattle has tried to find a veteran backup, to no avail. Backup Seneca Wallace is good enough to run the offense, but Mike Holmgren wouldn't mind using his athletic ability at receiver. Third-stringer David Greene could be down to his last chance at proving he belongs in the NFL.

Running Backs Shaun Alexander is still among the NFL's upper-echelon backs. He proved it by putting up big numbers against Green Bay and San Diego, a couple of stout teams against the run last season. But now that he's 30 and coming off a foot injury, it's fair to wonder how many good years he has left. Alexander needs some help from an offensive line that struggled last season and one more productive season from 36-year-old fullback Mack Strong. Up-and-coming fullback Leonard Weaver can also contribute as a blocker. Still, Seattle learned last season that the offense isn't nearly as good without Alexander. There had been some thought that the passing game opened up lanes for Alexander. That's true for any offense, but Seattle has gotten such consistent play from Alexander that his production might have been taken for granted. Not any more.


Matt Hasselbeck

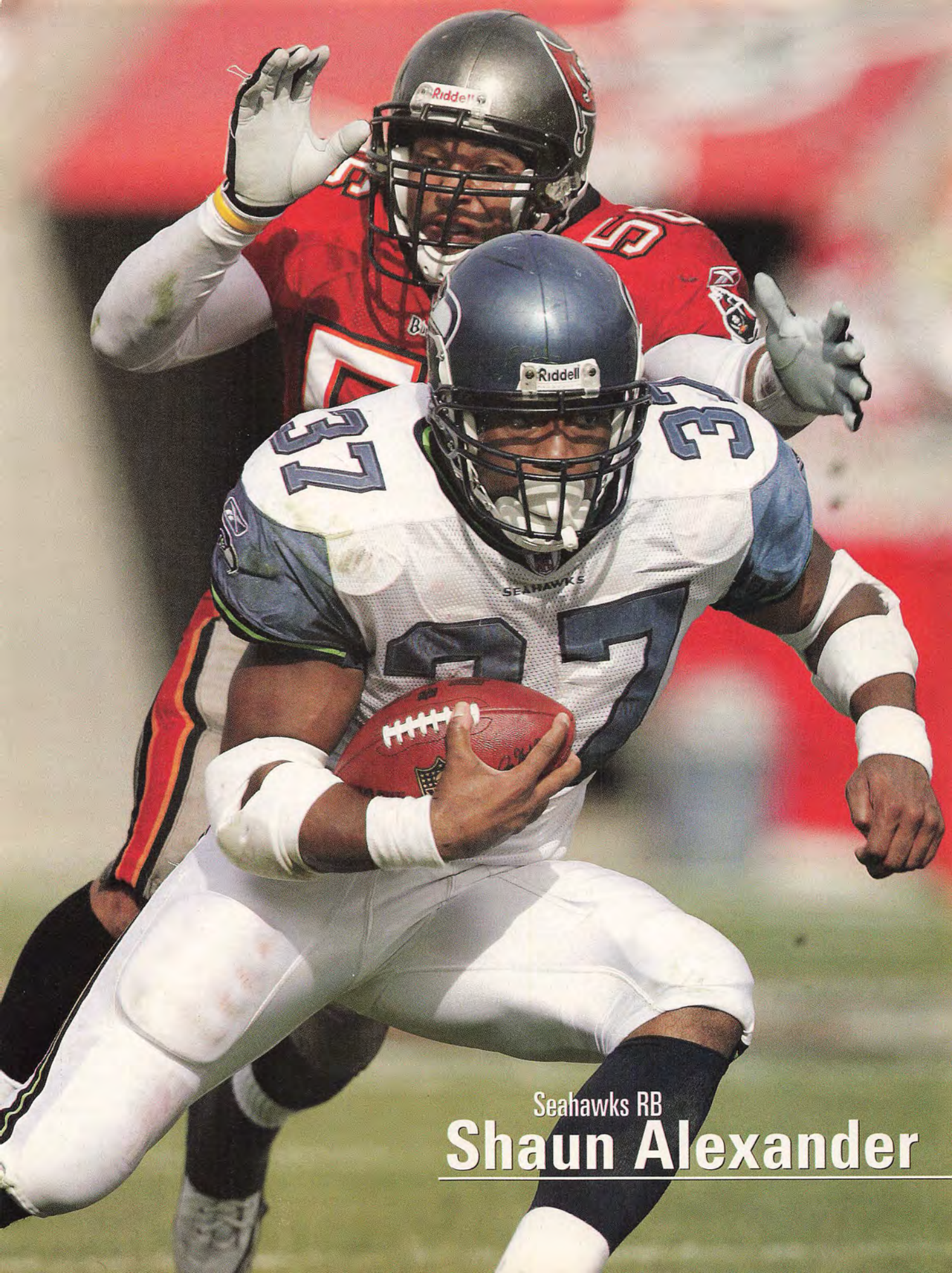
Receivers Deion Branch and Nate Burleson did not meet expectations last season. The rest of the offense struggled, too. Branch will move to flanker this season after management traded Darrell Jackson to San Francisco. The switch should result in more receptions for the former Super Bowl MVP. Burleson could have a hard time cracking the lineup now that coaches have seen what D.J. Hackett offers to the offense. Hackett is different physically from his teammates at the position. He's 6'2" and blessed with good speed, but better hands. Hackett was a late bloomer because he played mostly

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Tampa Bay	4:15 pm
Sept.	16	at Arizona	4:05 pm
Sept.	23	Cincinnati	4:05 pm
Sept.	30	at San Francisco	4:05 pm
Oct.	7	at Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	New Orleans	8:15 pm
Oct.	21	St. Louis	4:15 pm
Week	8	BYE	
Nov.	4	at Cleveland	4:05 pm
Nov.	12	San Francisco	8:30 pm
Nov.	18	Chicago	8:15 pm
Nov.	25	at St. Louis	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	Arizona	4:05 pm
Dec.	16	at Carolina	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	Baltimore	4:15 pm
Dec.	30	at Atlanta	1:00 pm

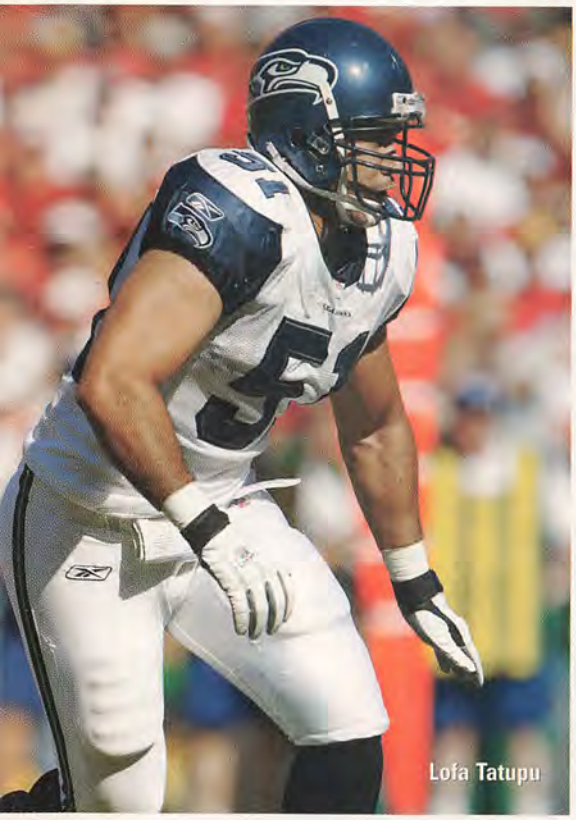
All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Hasselbeck: Scott Miller/US Presswire; Alexander: Joe Robbins/Getty Images



Seahawks RB

Shaun Alexander


Lofa Tatupu

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Not what he had in mind Mike Holmgren wasn't happy to see his team trade receiver Darrell Jackson to the 49ers. But he knew that a trade made sense because Jackson, upset about his contract, wasn't willing to attend voluntary minicamps or participate in the offseason program. President Tim Ruskell wants his players fully committed. "Tim and I had a number of discussions on it," Holmgren said. "We are coming at it from different angles, I would say. Both Tim and I want to do what is best for the team. I thought we had some really healthy discussions on how to do this. The more we talked about it, the more we kind of had to settle on something."

No veteran help at QB The Seahawks keep trying to find a veteran backup quarterback to free up Seneca Wallace for receiving duty. They keep striking out because most veterans are looking for a place they might be able to start. In Seattle, Matt Hasselbeck is the established starter and Wallace would remain the No. 2 guy. "We will always be looking for someone that could probably fit that bill and we have the last couple years," Holmgren said. "The fact of the matter is, that is a tough guy to find. … Never say never. There is a chance." Seattle brought in David Carr for a visit before he signed with Carolina.

basketball through his high school years. With Jackson gone and Burleson playing catch-up, this is his chance to shine. Bobby Engram remains the third receiver but his age (34) and health are of concern.

Offensive Linemen After losing Steve Hutchinson a year ago, the Seahawks waved goodbye to retiring center Robbie Tobeck, who had been a stabilizing force on the line and in the locker room. He will be missed, but it's also time for 2005 first-round pick Chris Spencer to prove his worth at the position. Another youngster, Rob Sims, takes over full-time in the left guard spot vacated by Hutchinson after the 2005 season. He's a good run blocker and a smart player. He and Spencer should work well together for several years to come. Seattle tried to get younger and more talented up front, but San Diego's Kris Dielman rejected their overtures in free agency. That leaves Chris Gray and Floyd Womack at right guard, definitely Plan B but not necessarily one that will fail. The Seahawks remain strong at the tackle positions even though Walter Jones is getting up there (33). He remains a Pro Bowl player. Sean Locklear looks like the long-term answer at right tackle, but he wasn't as good last season.

Defensive Linemen Team president Tim Ruskell began his defensive overhaul two years ago, remaking the linebacker position. He hit the secondary and defensive line this offseason. Kerney takes over at left end, a position he played well until a torn pectoral muscle ended his 2006 season, Kerney's final year in Atlanta. The injury is nearly healed. Seattle is betting $19.5 million over the next three years that Kerney can become a Pro Bowl player again after age 30. Betting on Marcus Tubbs could be riskier. The 324-pound defensive tackle is a key to the team's front seven, but microfracture knee surgery kept him out until training camp. Can Tubbs come back strong? The defense could have a hard time finally breaking into the top 10 without him playing at a high level.

Linebackers Everyone knows about the Seahawks' Pro Bowl linebackers. Lofa Tatupu is the instinctive middle linebacker who gets people lined up right and shoots gaps at just the right angles. Julian Peterson is the freakishly athletic pass rusher with the speed to play safety if needed. Leroy Hill is the third wheel, but he's more talented than that. Injuries bogged him down in a sophomore slump after he broke out with a 7.5-sack rookie season. Peterson's arrival also left Hill oddly out of sorts, but that changed late last season. The coaching staff got him more involved and Hill started making plays again.

Defensive Backs Seattle ran out of cornerbacks in the playoffs last season, one reason the team took Maryland's Josh Wilson in the second round of the draft. Seattle also took extensive measures to solidify the safety position, where breakdowns have hurt the team and frustrated its fans. Michael Boulware is one of the best athletes on the team. But as a converted linebacker, he lacks the instincts needed to play strong safety. Free safety Ken Hamlin was allowed to leave in free agency as Seattle decided to start fresh at the position. Free agent additions Grant and Russell were signed to stabilize the position. Former Falcons head coach Jim Mora signed on to coach the secondary. Seattle now has high expectations for a group that hasn't held up its end recently.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Shaun Alexander, RB
His stock is likely to drop a few spots on draft day, but he'll be a value pick if he falls very far.
Deion Branch, WR
Has a great fantasy opportunity to become the Seahawks' go-to receiver now that Darrell Jackson is gone.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists The Seahawks brought back clutch kicker Josh Brown, their franchise player. Second-year man Ryan Plackemeier has a chance to become one of the league's better punters now that he's learning how to kick directionally instead of solely for distance. Burleson and Wilson give the return game needed life. Burleson was a game-breaker at times last season. Wilson could get some of those reps.

Coaching Staff Holmgren feels a sense of urgency heading into what figures to be his final season or two in Seattle. He wants another shot at the Super Bowl before he's done. Adding Mora and special teams coach Bruce DeHaven to the staff should help. Mora takes over as secondary coach. He is new to the Seahawks but not to the staff, having worked with coordinator John Marshall in San Francisco in 1997, when the 49ers had the NFL's top-ranked defense. Mora should help 2003 first-round pick Marcus Trufant finally realize his potential. DeHaven brings credibility to special teams. The offensive staff returns pretty much intact, with coordinator Gil Haskell again playing a leading role behind the scenes.

Tatupu, Branch: Larry Smith

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
11	Greene, David	QB	6'3"	226	2	Georgia	D3a-05
5	Hamdan, Gibran	QB	6'4"	220	2	Indiana	PS-SF-06
8	Hasselbeck, Matt	QB	6'4"	223	8	Boston College	T-GB-01
15	Wallace, Seneca	QB	5'11"	196	4	Iowa State	D4a-03
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
37	Alexander, Shaun	RB	5'11"	225	7	Alabama	D1a-00
34	Kirtman, David	FB	6'0"	232	1	USC	D5-06
20	Morris, Maurice	RB	5'11"	202	5	Oregon	D2a-02
49	Parry, Josh	FB	6'2"	250	3	San Jose State	T-Phi-06
38	Strong, Mack	FB	6'0"	245	13	Georgia	FA-93
43	Weaver, Leonard	FB	6'0"	251	2	Carson-Newman	FA-05
30	Weeks, Marquis	RB	5'10"	216	1	Virginia	FA-05
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
83	Branch, Deion	WR	5'9"	183	5	Louisville	T-NE-06
81	Burleson, Nate	WR	6'0"	192	4	Nevada	FA-Min-06
84	Engram, Bobby	WR	5'10"	188	11	Penn State	FA-Chi-01
18	Hackett, D.J.	WR	6'2"	199	2	Colorado	D5-04
85	Heller, Will	TE	6'6"	265	4	Georgia Tech	FA-TB-06
47	Joppru, Ben	TE	6'4"	242	4	Michigan	PS-Chi-06
87	Obomanu, Ben	WR	6'0"	203	1	Auburn	D7b-06
88	Pollard, Marcus	TE	6'3"	250	12	Bradley	FA-Det-07
89	Stephens, Leonard	TE	6'3"	250	2	Howard	FA-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
68	Ashworth, Tom	T/G	6'6"	305	5	Colorado	FA-NE-06
62	Gray, Chris	G	6'4"	308	14	Auburn	FA-Chi-98
71	Jones, Walter	T	6'5"	315	10	Florida State	D1b-97
75	Locklear, Sean	T	6'4"	301	3	NC State	D3-04
63	Murphy, Jason	G	6'2"	303	1	Virginia Tech	FA-06
60	Ross, Pat	C	6'3"	301	1	Boston College	FA-06
67	Sims, Rob	G	6'3"	307	1	Ohio State	D4-06
65	Spencer, Chris	C	6'3"	309	2	Ole Miss	D1-05
64	Szalay, Thatcher	G/C	6'4"	303	2	Montana	FA-06
74	Willis, Ray	T	6'6"	327	2	Florida State	D4-05
77	Womack, Floyd	T/G	6'4"	333	6	Mississippi State	D4c-01
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
99	Bernard, Rocky	DT	6'3"	293	5	Texas A&M	D5-a-02
91	Darby, Chuck	DT	6'0"	270	6	South Carolina St.	FA-TB-05
95	Davis, Russell	DT	6'4"	306	8	North Carolina	FA-Ari-06
94	Fisher, Bryce	DE	6'3"	268	6	Air Force	FA-StL-05
70	Green, Brandon	DE	6'2"	264	4	Rice	FA-05
97	Kerney, Patrick	DE	6'5"	273	8	Virginia	FA-Atl-07
72	Rasmussen, Kemp	DE	6'3"	265	5	Indiana	FA-Car-06
55	Tapp, Darryl	DE	6'1"	265	1	Virginia Tech	D2-06
92	Taylor, Eric	DT	6'2"	305	1	Memphis	FA-06
93	Terrill, Craig	DT	6'2"	294	3	Purdue	D6-04
90	Tubbs, Marcus	DT	6'3"	324	3	Texas	D1-04
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
57	Bentley, Kevin	LB	6'0"	245	5	Northwestern	FA-Cle-05
58	Cooper, Marquis	LB	6'3"	213	3	Washington	FA-06
56	Hill, Leroy	LB	6'1"	229	2	Clemson	D3b-05
53	Koutouvides, Niko	LB	6'2"	238	3	Purdue	D4-04
50	Laury, Lance	LB	6'2"	233	1	South Carolina	FA-06
59	Peterson, Julian	LB	6'3"	235	7	Michigan State	FA-SF-06
51	Tatupu, Lofa	LB	6'0"	238	2	USC	D2-05
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
27	Babineaux, Jordan	CB	6'0"	200	3	Southern Arkansas	FA-04
28	Boulware, Michael	S	6'3"	223	3	Florida State	D2-04
24	Grant, Deon	S	6'2"	210	7	Tennessee	FA-Jac-07
32	Green, Mike	S	6'0"	195	7	Northwestern State	T-Chi-06
31	Herndon, Kelly	CB	5'10"	180	5	Toledo	FA-Den-05
21	Jennings, Kelly	CB	5'11"	178	1	Miami	D1-06
6	Ross, Gerard	CB	6'1"	200	1	Florida State	FA-06
25	Russell, Brian	S	6'2"	207	5	San Diego State	FA-Cle-07
23	Trufant, Marcus	CB	5'11"	199	4	Washington State	D1-03
22	Williams, Jimmy	CB	5'11"	190	6	Vanderbilt	FA-05
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
3	Brown, Josh	K	6'0"	202	4	Nebraska	D7a-03
16	Plackemeier, Ryan	P	6'3"	248	1	Wake Forest	D7a-06
48	Rackley, Derek	LS	6'4"	250	7	Minnesota	FA-06

Head Coach: Mike Holmgren (147–93, 12–10 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Gil Haskell
Defensive Coordinator: John Marshall

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	81	Nate Burleson
WR	18	D.J. Hackett
LT	71	Walter Jones
LG	67	Rob Sims
C	65	Chris Spencer
RG	62	Chris Gray
RT	75	Sean Locklear
TE	**88**	**Marcus Pollard**
QB	8	Matt Hasselbeck
RB	37	Shaun Alexander
FB	38	Mack Strong

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
LE	**97**	**Patrick Kerney**
LT	91	Chuck Darby
RT	90	Marcus Tubbs
RE	55	Darryl Tapp
SLB	59	Julian Peterson
MLB	51	Lofa Tatupu
WLB	56	Leroy Hill
LCB	21	Kelly Jennings
RCB	23	Marcus Trufant
SS	**25**	**Brian Russell**
FS	**24**	**Deon Grant**

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	3	Josh Brown
P	16	Ryan Plackemeier

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	15	Seneca Wallace
WR	84	Bobby Engram
OL	68	Tom Ashworth
DT	**92**	**Brandon Mebane**
CB	27	Jordan Babineaux

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Qwest Field (72,000)
Surface: Field Turf
www.seahawks.com
Ticket Info: 888-635-4295
Training Camp: Eastern Washington (Cheney, WA)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

FS	Deon Grant	(Jac)
DE	Patrick Kerney	(Atl)
TE	Marcus Pollard	(Det)
FS	Brian Russell	(Cle)

Key Losses

FS	Ken Hamlin	(Dal)
WR	Darrell Jackson	(SF)
LB	D.D. Lewis	(Den)
TE	Jerramy Stevens	(TB)
C	Robbie Tobeck	(Retired)
DE	Grant Wistrom	(FA)

2007 Draft

2.	Josh Wilson	CB	5'9"	188	Maryland
3.	Brandon Mebane	DT	6'1"	305	California
4.	Baraka Atkins	DE	6'4"	278	Miami
4.	Mansfield Wrotto	G	6'3"	316	Georgia Tech
5.	Will Herring	OLB	6'2"	229	Auburn
6.	Courtney Taylor	WR	6'1"	209	Auburn
6.	Jordan Kent	WR	6'3"	209	Oregon
7.	Steve Vallos	G	6'3"	305	Wake Forest

The Seahawks suffered a net talent loss when they parted with Jackson, Stevens, Hamlin and Wistrom. They whiffed on Kris Dielman and Daniel Graham in free agency. The team also watched New England use its first-round pick, the one Seattle spent in the Deion Branch trade. Seahawks management has put a premium on character and chemistry. President Tim Ruskell thinks he's getting closer to finding the right mix. There are indications already that Wilson could be ready to start right away. Mike Holmgren called Wilson a "playmaker" after the Seahawks' first minicamp, not the sort of comment Holmgren throws around lightly. Mebane, a run-stuffing defensive tackle, has also looked good. Holmgren thinks he can get 50 catches from Pollard, his new 35-year-old tight end.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Matt Hasselbeck	371	210	2,442	18	15
Seneca Wallace	141	82	927	8	7
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Shaun Alexander	252	896	3.6	7	
Maurice Morris	161	604	3.8	0	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Darrell Jackson*	63	956	15.2	10	
Deion Branch	53	725	13.7	4	
D.J. Hackett	45	610	13.6	4	

Kicking: Josh Brown, 25-31 FGs, 36-36 XPs, 111 points
Tackles: Lofa Tatupu, 122; Ken Hamlin,* 96
Sacks: Julian Peterson, 10
Interceptions: Ken Hamlin,* 3
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (9–7)

Sept.	10	at Detroit	W	9– 6
Sept.	17	Arizona	W	21–10
Sept.	24	N.Y. Giants	W	42–30
Oct.	1	at Chicago	L	6–37
Oct.	15	at St. Louis	W	30–28
Oct.	22	Minnesota	L	13–31
Oct.	29	at Kansas City	L	28–35
Nov.	6	Oakland	W	16– 0
Nov.	12	St. Louis	W	24–22
Nov.	19	at San Francisco	L	14–20
Nov.	27	Green Bay	W	34–24
Dec.	3	at Denver	W	23–20
Dec.	10	at Arizona	L	21–27
Dec.	14	San Francisco	L	14–24
Dec.	24	San Diego	L	17–20
Dec.	31	at Tampa Bay	W	23– 7
		Postseason		
Jan.	6	Dallas	W	21–20
Jan.	14	at Chicago (OT)	L	24–27

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	311.1	19	-11.0
Rushing	120.2	14	+2.9
Passing	190.9	20	-13.9
Scoring	20.9	14	+0.2
Punt Returns	8.7	15T	-
Kick Returns	22.4	18	-0.1
Red Zone TD %	52.4	14	+1.6
Defense			
Total Defense	330.3	19	+8.2
Against Rush	126.8	22	+9.5
Against Pass	203.5	16	-1.3
Points Allowed	21.3	19	+0.6
Interceptions	12	25T	-4.3
Sacks	41	6T	+4.7
Turnover Diff.	-8	27T	-

RAMS

Scott Linehan's first season as the Rams' head coach was dramatic — in both directions. The team surprised many by winning four of its first five, then confounded many by losing seven of its next eight.

At one point there was grumbling about whether the organization made the right choice in hiring the former Miami Dolphins offensive coordinator. But Linehan made adjustments. A sagging offense blossomed late in the season, and the Rams finished with a three-game winning streak.

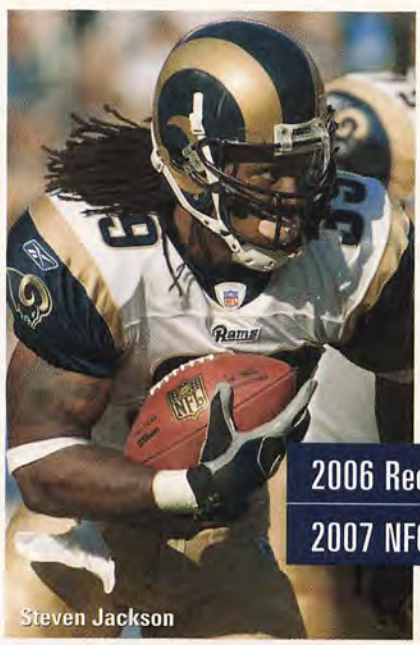
Once the roller coaster finally stopped, a foundation appeared to be in place for a playoff-caliber club. "I don't want to be (overly) optimistic," Linehan says. "By nature you do that at this time of year. You don't want to set the bar too high and all that stuff. But I feel very strong about how much we've improved as team."

Time will tell if enough improvements were made on defense and special teams to complement the potent one-two attack of quarterback Marc Bulger's passing game and Steven Jackson's running.

Quarterbacks The Rams are as settled at this position as any team in the league. Bulger stayed relatively healthy — although he needed pain shots before several games because of bruised ribs — and had a career year in 2006. One of the most accurate throwers in the game, he set franchise records for attempts and lowest percentage of passes intercepted. Bulger also clearly established himself as a leader, calling out his team's lack of effort and focus after a loss to Arizona. Backup quarterback Gus Frerotte is an experienced starter with a strong arm and a working knowledge of Linehan's offense.

Running Backs With Marshall Faulk no longer casting a long shadow, Jackson came into his own last season. He accounted for 2,334 yards from scrimmage, which is the fifth-best total in NFL history. He corrected a tendency to dance behind the line of scrimmage and did more straight-ahead slashing. At the same time, he became a surprisingly proficient receiver, catching 90 passes. No back in the league had as many first downs in 3rd-and-1 situations as Jackson (14). He also proved he could be durable, missing only part of one game and finishing with 436 touches, five short of tying Eric Dickerson's franchise record set in 1983. Fullback Madison Hedgecock is an effective lead blocker. Establishing a load-sharing backup for Jackson will be a priority. To that end, the team made versatile Rutgers running back Brian Leonard its second-round draft pick.

Receivers He missed extending his record streak of six consecutive 1,300-yard seasons, but Torry Holt remains among the elite wide-outs in football. Holt had 93 catches for 1,188 yards and 10 touchdowns in '06, despite playing the final month of the season with a sore knee. Isaac Bruce will turn 35 in November, but he hasn't slowed down much. Bruce exceeded 1,000 yards receiving for the eighth time last year and caught more than 70 balls for the seventh time. He averaged 14.8 yards per catch, which was among the league's best. The Holt-Bruce combo remains one of NFL's best. The Rams added Drew Bennett to the mix with an off-season signing. At 6'5", 206 pounds, Bennett is a big No. 3 receiver out of the slot and should blend nicely with the deer-like Holt and Bruce. The Rams also signed former Dolphin Randy McMichael in hopes of getting more from the tight end spot.


Steven Jackson

Offensive Linemen Injuries were a big problem in 2006. The five projected starters managed to make only 54 of a possible 80 starts. Bottom line: Bulger was sacked 49 times, which is only two shy of the franchise futility record. The line also was guilty of a number of untimely penalties and mistakes. Right guard Richie Incognito is a powerhouse blocker and plays with emotion.

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE RAMS

The Rams may have reached the turning point for this season during last season. With the team struggling, head coach Scott Linehan turned over the playcalling duties to offensive coordinator Greg Olson. It was a remarkable move, considering Linehan was hired based largely on his playcalling performance as an offensive coordinator for Miami. The action paid dividends in two ways — the offense came alive over the final four games and Linehan may have crossed over the bridge as a true head coach. There is no question the Rams will have the offensive weapons to win, as well as a better feel for Linehan and his system. The team averaged 27.5 offensive points per game over the final six weeks. Marc Bulger is an upper-echelon quarterback, Steven Jackson is one the league's most formidable running backs and Torry Holt is a home run-hitting receiver. If the offensive line performs, watch out. But defensive coordinator Jim Haslett must show, with some tweaks, that he can put together a creditable defense. Money was spent prudently to address defensive deficiencies. The measuring stick will be the defensive line, which was among the worst in the NFL when it came to stopping the run. Improving special teams coverage must be a priority. The Rams have to be more successful in field position exchanges to ease the pressure on both sides of the ball. With those offensive weapons, St. Louis is still dangerous if they just block and tackle.

2006 Record: 8–8

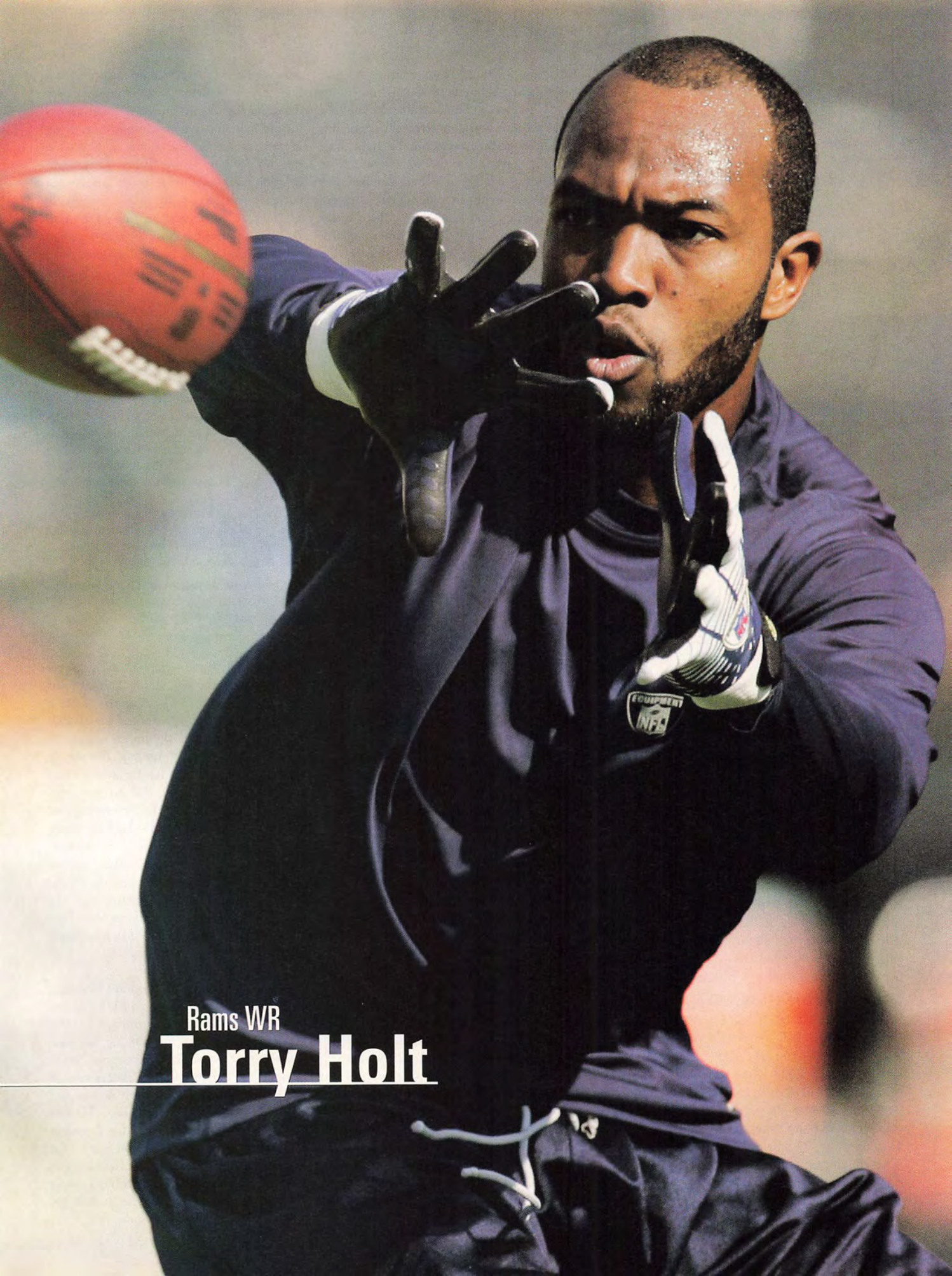
2007 NFC West Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Carolina	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	San Francisco	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at Dallas	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	Arizona	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Baltimore	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Seattle	4:15 pm
Oct.	28	Cleveland	1:00 pm
Week	9	BYE	
Nov.	11	at New Orleans	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at San Francisco	4:15 pm
Nov.	25	Seattle	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	Atlanta	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Green Bay	1:00 pm
Dec.	20	Pittsburgh	8:15 pm
Dec.	30	at Arizona	4:15 pm

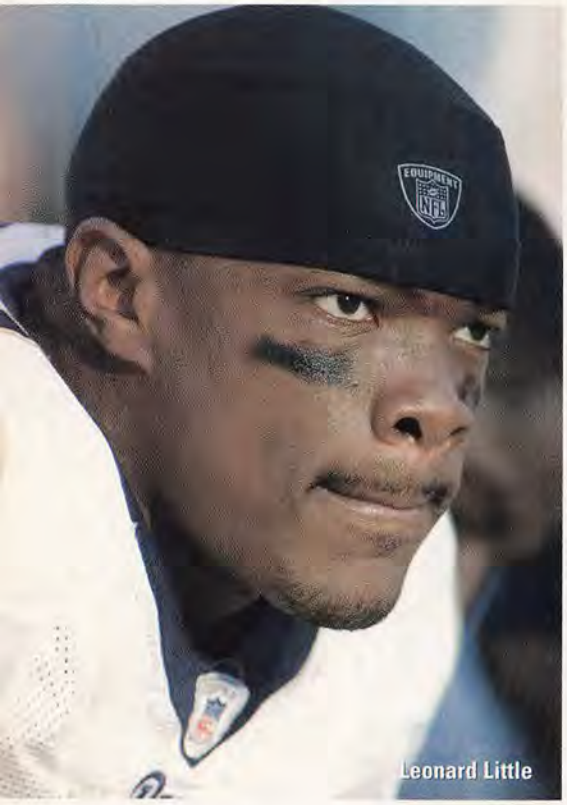
All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Jackson: Peter Brouillet
Holt: Jeff Haniish/US Presswire



Rams WR

Torry Holt


Leonard Little

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Homeboy Rams coach Scott Linehan admitted to having a "little bit of a soft spot" for No. 1 draft pick Adam Carriker. That's because the two share Eastern Washington roots. Linehan is a native of Sunnyside, Wash., while Carriker hails from Kennewick, Wash., just 40 miles up the road. Carriker was only 3, however, when his family moved to Hastings, Neb.

Not Ready For Prime Time The Rams and their "Greatest Show on Turf" were once the darlings of primetime television as they fashioned a 61–27 record from 1999-2003. But they have not had a winning record in three seasons and, barring changes under the league's flexible scheduling program, they will appear only once on primetime TV this season — on Thursday, Dec. 20, when they play host to the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Time To Go Marshall Faulk, who sat out all of last year trying to get physically well enough to play again, announced his retirement in March. Faulk said he was at an offseason luncheon in his honor when reality set in. "A very good friend of mine told me, 'There's not that many 34-year-old running backs that come back to play,'" says Faulk, who turned 34 in February. "I started thinking about it. It's a tough position to play." A lock for the Hall of Fame, Faulk played in 12 NFL seasons, seven Pro Bowls and two Super Bowls.

But his loss of composure — and subsequent flagrant foul — cost the Rams dearly in a loss to Seattle. Orlando Pace is a perennial Pro Bowler at left tackle, and Alex Barron is getting there on the right side. Claude Terrell needs to show more consistency at left guard. Brett Romberg was a late-season surprise at center, showing good leverage and know-how, which could move veteran Andy McCollum to guard. Veteran Todd Steussie is a dependable backup at guard or tackle, and Mark Setterstrom demonstrated good potential in six late-season starts at guard.

Defensive Linemen This group was to rushing offenses what Charmin tissue is to … well, you get the idea. St. Louis gave up 2,327 yards on the ground, the third-worst figure in franchise history. There are mitigating factors — the team played 10 games against teams with 1,000-yard rushers, including four games against the league's top three ground gainers, LaDainian Tomlinson, Larry Johnson and Frank Gore. But the run defense was awful, and all things start at the line. The Rams addressed the area in the draft, taking Nebraska defensive end Adam Carriker, who will play at tackle. Veteran nose tackle Jimmy Kennedy continued to disappoint and could drop down on the depth chart. Veteran tackle La'Roi Glover needs to bounce back with more consistent output. The Rams signed end James Hall during the offseason to provide opposite end pass-rush help to Leonard Little, who is among the league's premier rushers. Victor Adeyanju was a pleasant development at right end as a rookie but needs improvement as a pass rusher.

Linebackers Given the aforementioned numbers on run defense, one might assume linebacking was not a strong suit for the Rams. But it could be with better play up front. Will Witherspoon has outstanding speed sideline-to-sideline, which is why defensive coordinator Jim Haslett likes him in the middle. Pisa Tinoisamoa's season was hampered by injuries, including two broken hands. Tinoisamoa is a playmaker, but he needs to demonstrate he can stay healthy. On the other side, Brandon Chillar came along as a dependable two-down player. Versatile Chris Draft was signed during the offseason to join the rotation. Raonall Smith has lots of speed and pass-rushing potential. Obviously, the group has to be more run-repellent if the Rams are to move up.

Defensive Backs This unit distinguished itself during the Rams' late-season surge. Rookie free safety Oshiomogho Atogwe, who struggled early in the season, was the team's most improved performer down the stretch. Atogwe has ball-hawking instincts, as demonstrated by his three interceptions and five forced fumbles. Strong safety Corey Chavous was second on the team in tackles behind Witherspoon and brings a steadying veteran presence. The Rams added some sock by signing former Bears safety Todd Johnson. Fakhir Brown is an underrated corner, generally solid and occasionally spectacular. First-year corner Tye Hill showed improved ball skills as the season wore on and could be a playmaker. Ron Bartell improved in the final weeks and made some plays at nickel back. Cornerbacks Mike Rumph and Lenny Walls were offseason signings to provide depth.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Steven Jackson, RB
A monster fantasy season in '06, but it's interesting that 10 of his 16 TDs came in the final four weeks of the season.
Marc Bulger, QB
His receiving arsenal was enhanced with the acquisitions of WR Drew Bennett and TE Randy McMichael.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists The Rams were 27th in the league in kickoff returns last season and tied for 25th in punt returns. The team has scored a touchdown on a return just once since 2002. Thus, Linehan took significant action to improve this area by trading for return specialist Dante Hall. "It's an area of need that we really felt we had to address," Linehan says. "One way of guaranteeing that that need gets fulfilled is to do it via trade, which we were able to do with what is arguably one of the best ever at the position." Jeff Wilkins remains one of the NFL's top placekickers. Surprisingly, the Rams elected not to retain punter Matt Turk and instead signed strong-legged, left-footed Donnie Jones away from Miami.

Coaching Staff There were awkward moments — none more awkward than a 15–0 loss and offensive meltdown at Carolina — but Linehan gets points for holding his first season together and finishing strong. "We're going in the right direction," Bulger says. "I think that's a testament to him that he got everyone in here to (believe)." Haslett brought high hopes when hired as defensive coordinator, but after a good start, the defense was disappointing. The Rams, again, spent money to address problem areas during the offseason, and Haslett will get another chance to make it work.

Little, Bulger: Peter Brouillet

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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
10	Bulger, Marc	QB	6'3"	212	6	West Virginia	FA-01
11	Fitzpatrick, Ryan	QB	6'2"	221	2	Harvard	D7A-05
12	Frerotte, Gus	QB	6'3"	233	13	Tulsa	FA-Mia-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
32	Alexis, Rich	RB	6'0"	213	3	Washington	FA-Jac-07
30	Fisher, Tony	RB	6'1"	223	5	Notre Dame	FA-GB-06
33	Harris, Kay-Jay	RB	6'0"	229	2	West Virginia	FA-06
44	Hedgecock, Madison	RB	6'3"	266	2	North Carolina	D7B-05
39	Jackson, Steven	RB	6'2"	231	3	Oregon State	D1-04
35	Washington, John David	RB	5'9"	208	1	Morehouse	FA-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
83	Bennett, Drew	WR	6'5"	206	6	UCLA	FA-Ten-07
80	Bruce, Isaac	WR	6'0"	188	13	Memphis	D2A-94
86	Byrd, Dominique	TE	6'2"	254	1	USC	D3C-06
15	Hagans, Marques	WR	5'10"	205	1	Virginia	D5-06
81	Holt, Torry	WR	6'0"	190	8	NC State	D1-99
82	Klopfenstein, Joe	TE	6'5"	256	1	Colorado	D2-06
89	Looker, Dane	WR	6'0"	194	6	Washington	FA-02
84	McMichael, Randy	TE	6'3"	255	5	Georgia	FA-Mia-07
17	Thompson, Dominique	WR	5'11"	205	2	William & Mary	FA-05
87	Walker, Aaron	TE	6'6"	270	4	Florida	FA-05
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
70	Barron, Alex	T	6'7"	315	2	Florida State	D1-05
72	Goldberg, Adam	G	6'7"	310	4	Wyoming	T-Min-06
68	Incognito, Richie	G	6'3"	305	2	Nebraska	D3B-05
67	McCollum, Andy	C	6'4"	300	13	Toledo	FA-NO-99
76	Pace, Orlando	T	6'7"	325	10	Ohio State	D1-97
65	Romberg, Brett	C	6'2"	298	3	Miami	FA-06
66	Setterstrom, Mark	G	6'4"	314	1	Minnesota	D7B-06
79	Steussie, Todd	T	6'6"	310	13	California	FA-TB-06
77	Strojny, Drew	T	6'7"	305	1	Duke	FA-05
75	Terrell, Claude	G	6'2"	330	2	New Mexico	D4B-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
94	Adeyanju, Victor	DE	6'4"	270	1	Indiana	D4-06
92	Bryant, Tony	DE	6'6"	282	7	Florida State	FA-06
	Fisk, Jason	DT	6'3"	300	12	Stanford	FA-06
97	Glover, La'Roi	DT	6'2"	290	11	San Diego State	FA-Dal-06
96	Hall, James	DE	6'2"	280	7	Michigan	FA-Det-07
73	Kennedy, Jimmy	DT	6'4"	325	4	Penn State	D1-03
91	Little, Leonard	DE	6'3"	263	9	Tennessee	D3-98
71	Sandidge, Tim	DT	6'1"	300	1	Virginia Tech	FA-06
99	Wroten, Claude	DT	6'2"	295	1	LSU	D3A-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
57	Alston, Jon	LB	6'0"	221	1	Stanford	D3B-06
54	Chillar, Brandon	LB	6'3"	242	3	UCLA	D4-04
52	Draft, Chris	LB	5'11"	232	8	Stanford	FA-Car-07
58	Kacyvenski, Isaiah	LB	6'1"	252	7	Harvard	FA-06
59	McGarigle, Tim	LB	6'0"	238	1	Northwestern	D7A-06
56	Smith, Raonall	LB	6'2"	245	5	Washington State	FA-Min-06
50	Tinoisamoa, Pisa	LB	6'1"	235	4	Hawaii	D2-03
51	Witherspoon, Will	LB	6'1"	234	5	Georgia	FA-Car-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
21	Atogwe, Oshiomogho	S	5'11"	210	2	Stanford	D3A-05
24	Bartell, Ron	S	6'1"	200	2	Howard	D2-05
34	Brown, Fakhir	CB	5'11"	192	7	Grambling	FA-NO-06
23	Butler, Jerametrius	CB	5'10"	185	6	Kansas State	D5-01
42	Carter, Jerome	S	5'11"	219	2	Florida State	D4A-05
25	Chavous, Corey	S	6'1"	208	9	Vanderbilt	FA-Min-06
26	Hill, Tye	CB	5'10"	185	1	Clemson	D1-06
35	Johnson, Todd	S	6'1"	200	3	Florida	FA-Chi-06
32	Reed, J.R.	S	5'11"	202	3	South Florida	FA-06
29	Rumph, Mike	CB	6'2"	206	5	Miami	FA-Was-07
27	Walls, Lenny	CB	6'4"	192	5	Boston College	FA-KC-07
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
	Hall, Dante	KR/WR	5'8"	187	7	Texas A&M	T-KC-07
5	Jones, Donnie	P	6'2"	222	3	LSU	FA-Mia-07
45	Massey, Chris	LS	6'0"	245	5	Marshall	D7-02
14	Wilkins, Jeff	K	6'2"	205	13	Youngstown State	FA-SF-97

Head Coach: Scott Linehan (8–8, 0–0 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Greg Olson
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Haslett

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	81	Torry Holt
WR	80	Isaac Bruce
LT	76	Orlando Pace
LG	75	Claude Terrell
C	67	Andy McCollum
RG	68	Richie Incognito
RT	70	Alex Barron
TE	**84**	**Randy McMichael**
QB	10	Marc Bulger
FB	44	Madison Hedgecock
RB	39	Steven Jackson

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	91	Leonard Little
DT	97	La'Roi Glover
DT	73	Jimmy Kennedy
DE	**96**	**James Hall**
SLB	50	Pisa Tinoisamoa
MLB	51	Will Witherspoon
WLB	54	Brandon Chillar
CB	26	Tye Hill
CB	34	Fakhir Brown
SS	25	Corey Chavous
FS	21	Oshiomogho Atogwe

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	14	Jeff Wilkins
P	**5**	**Donnie Jones**

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	12	Gus Frerotte
WR	**83**	**Drew Bennett**
OL	79	Todd Steussie
S	24	Ron Bartell
KR		**Dante Hall**

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Edward Jones Dome (66,000)
Surface: Field turf
www.stlouisrams.com
Ticket Info: 314-425-8830
Training Camp: Rams Park Training Facility

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

WR	Drew Bennett (Ten)
LB	Chris Draft (Car)
KR	Dante Hall (KC)
DE	James Hall (Det)
SS	Todd Johnson (Chi)
P	Donnie Jones (Mia)
TE	Randy McMichael (Mia)

Key Losses

WR	Kevin Curtis (Phi)
WR	Shaun McDonald (Det)
G	Adam Timmerman (FA)
P	Matt Turk (FA)

2007 Draft

1.	Adam Carriker	DE	6'6"	292	Nebraska
2.	Brian Leonard	FB	6'1"	238	Rutgers
3.	Jonathan Wade	CB	5'10"	192	Tennessee
5.	Dustin Fry	C	6'2"	326	Clemson
5.	Clifton Ryan	DT	6'3"	310	Michigan State
6.	Ken Shackleford	T	6'5"	322	Georgia
7.	Keith Jackson	DT	6'0"	305	Arkansas
7.	Derek Stanley	WR	5'9"	172	Wis.-Whitewater

Oddly, the most significant offseason signing was on offense, where the Rams spent $30 million for Bennett and added McMichael, a productive tight end from Miami. The 6'5" Bennett replaces Curtis, who signed with Philadelphia, and gives coach Scott Linehan the big receiver he craves going over the middle. On defense, the team traded a fifth-round pick to Detroit for a solid run-pass defensive end in James Hall. They signed a versatile linebacker and potential starter in Draft, who started 16 games for Carolina last season. Plans are to play Carriker, an end in college, at tackle, and hopes are he can make an immediate impression at a position that has been a festering sore. The Rams were ranked 31st in the NFL in rush defense. Meanwhile another fifth-round draft pick was traded to Kansas City for another Hall — return specialist Dante Hall.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Marc Bulger	588	370	4,301	24	8
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Steven Jackson	346	1,528	4.4	13	
Stephen Davis*	40	177	4.4	0	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Torry Holt	93	1,188	12.8	10	
Steven Jackson	90	806	9.0	3	
Isaac Bruce	74	1,098	14.8	3	

Kicking: Jeff Wilkins, 32-37 FGs, 35-35 XPs, 131 points
Tackles: Will Witherspoon, 113; Corey Chavous, 86
Sacks: Leonard Little, 13
Interceptions: Four players tied with 3
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	10	Denver	W	18–10
Sept.	17	at San Francisco	L	13–20
Sept.	24	at Arizona	W	16–14
Oct.	1	Detroit	W	41–34
Oct.	8	at Green Bay	W	23–20
Oct.	15	Seattle	L	28–30
Oct.	29	at San Diego	L	24–38
Nov.	5	Kansas City	L	17–31
Nov.	12	at Seattle	L	22–24
Nov.	19	at Carolina	L	0–15
Nov.	26	San Francisco	W	20–17
Dec.	3	Arizona	L	20–34
Dec.	11	Chicago	L	27–42
Dec.	17	at Oakland	W	20– 0
Dec.	24	Washington (OT)	W	37–31
Dec.	31	at Minnesota	W	41–21

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	360.4	6	+38.3
Rushing	112.8	17	-4.5
Passing	247.6	4	+42.8
Scoring	22.9	10	+2.2
Punt Returns	7.8	27T	-0.9
Kick Returns	21.3	26	-1.2
Red Zone TD %	57.4	8	+6.6
Defense			
Total Defense	335.1	23	+13.0
Against Rush	145.4	31	-28.1
Against Pass	189.7	8	+15.1
Points Allowed	23.8	28	-3.1
Interceptions	17	13T	+0.7
Sacks	34	19T	-2.3
Turnover Diff.	+14	2	-

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2007 » NFL SCHEDULES

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OFFICIAL OUTFITTER OF THE NFL

WEEK 1

Thursday, Sept. 6
New Orleans at Indianapolis
Sunday, Sept. 9
Atlanta at Minnesota
Carolina at St. Louis
Denver at Buffalo
Kansas City at Houston
Miami at Washington
New England at N.Y. Jets
Philadelphia at Green Bay
Pittsburgh at Cleveland
Tennessee at Jacksonville
Chicago at San Diego
Detroit at Oakland
Tampa Bay at Seattle
N.Y. Giants at Dallas
Monday, Sept. 10
Baltimore at Cincinnati
Arizona at San Francisco

WEEK 2

Sunday, Sept. 16
Atlanta at Jacksonville
Buffalo at Pittsburgh
Cincinnati at Cleveland
Green Bay at N.Y. Giants
Houston at Carolina
Indianapolis at Tennessee
New Orleans at Tampa Bay
San Francisco at St. Louis
Dallas at Miami
Minnesota at Detroit
Seattle at Arizona
Kansas City at Chicago
N.Y. Jets at Baltimore
Oakland at Denver
San Diego at New England
Monday, Sept. 17
Washington at Philadelphia

WEEK 3

Sunday, Sep. 23
Arizona at Baltimore
Buffalo at New England
Detroit at Philadelphia
Indianapolis at Houston
Miami at N.Y. Jets
Minnesota at Kansas City
San Diego at Green Bay
San Francisco at Pittsburgh
St. Louis at Tampa Bay
Cincinnati at Seattle
Cleveland at Oakland
Jacksonville at Denver
Carolina at Atlanta
N.Y. Giants at Washington
Dallas at Chicago
Monday, Sept. 24
Tennessee at New Orleans

RBK OFFICIAL OUTFITTER OF THE NFL

WEEK 4

Sunday, Sept. 30
Baltimore at Cleveland
Chicago at Detroit
Green Bay at Minnesota
Houston at Atlanta
N.Y. Jets at Buffalo
Oakland at Miami
St. Louis at Dallas
Seattle at San Francisco
Tampa Bay at Carolina
Denver at Indianapolis
Kansas City at San Diego
Pittsburgh at Arizona
Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants
Monday, Oct. 1
New England at Cincinnati
Open date: Jacksonville, New Orleans, Tennessee, Washington

WEEK 5

Sunday, Oct. 7
Arizona at St. Louis
Atlanta at Tennessee
Carolina at New Orleans
Cleveland at New England
Detroit at Washington
Jacksonville at Kansas City
Miami at Houston
N.Y. Jets at N.Y. Giants
Seattle at Pittsburgh
Tampa Bay at Indianapolis
Baltimore at San Francisco
San Diego at Denver
Chicago at Green Bay
Monday, Oct. 8
Dallas at Buffalo
Open date: Cincinnati, Minnesota, Oakland, Philadelphia

WEEK 6

Sunday, Oct. 14
Cincinnati at Kansas City
Houston at Jacksonville
Miami at Cleveland
Minnesota at Chicago
Philadelphia at N.Y. Jets
St. Louis at Baltimore
Tennessee at Tampa Bay
Washington at Green Bay
Carolina at Arizona
New England at Dallas
Oakland at San Diego
New Orleans at Seattle
Monday, Oct. 15
N.Y. Giants at Atlanta
Open date: Buffalo, Denver, Detroit, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, San Francisco

WEEK 7

Sunday, Oct. 21
Arizona at Washington
Atlanta at New Orleans
Baltimore at Buffalo
Minnesota at Dallas
New England at Miami
San Francisco at N.Y. Giants
Tampa Bay at Detroit
Tennessee at Houston
Kansas City at Oakland
N.Y. Jets at Cincinnati
Chicago at Philadelphia
St. Louis at Seattle
Pittsburgh at Denver
Monday, Oct. 22
Indianapolis at Jacksonville
Open date: Carolina, Cleveland, Green Bay, San Diego

WEEK 8

Sunday, Oct. 28
Cleveland at St. Louis
Detroit at Chicago
Indianapolis at Carolina
Oakland at Tennessee
Philadelphia at Minnesota
Pittsburgh at Cincinnati
Buffalo at N.Y. Jets
Houston at San Diego
Jacksonville at Tampa Bay
New Orleans at San Fran.
Washington at New England
*N.Y. Giants vs. Miami
*(London, England)
Monday, Oct. 29
Green Bay at Denver
Open date: Arizona, Atlanta, Baltimore, Dallas, Kansas City, Seattle

WEEK 9

Sunday, Nov. 4
Arizona at Tampa Bay
Carolina at Tennessee
Cincinnati at Buffalo
Denver at Detroit
Green Bay at Kansas City
Jacksonville at New Orleans
San Diego at Minnesota
San Francisco at Atlanta
Washington at N.Y. Jets
Seattle at Cleveland
Houston at Oakland
New England at Indianapolis
Dallas at Philadelphia
Monday, Nov. 5
Baltimore at Pittsburgh
Open date: Chicago, Miami, N.Y. Giants, St. Louis

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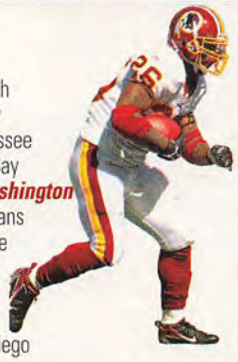
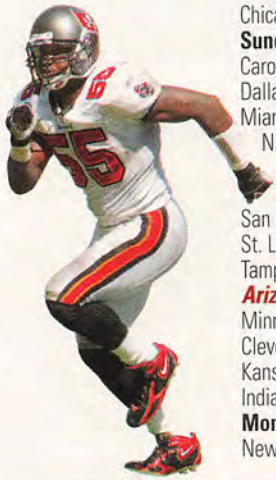
WEEK 10

Sunday, Nov. 11
Atlanta at Carolina
Buffalo at Miami
Cleveland at Pittsburgh
Denver at Kansas City
Jacksonville at Tennessee
Minnesota at Green Bay
Philadelphia at Washington
St. Louis at New Orleans
Cincinnati at Baltimore
Chicago at Oakland
Dallas at N.Y. Giants
Detroit at Arizona
Indianapolis at San Diego
Monday, Nov. 12
San Francisco at Seattle
Open date: Houston, New England, N.Y. Jets, Tampa Bay



WEEK 11

Sunday, Nov. 18
Arizona at Cincinnati
Carolina at Green Bay
Cleveland at Baltimore
Kansas City at Indianapolis
Miami at Philadelphia
New England at Buffalo
New Orleans at Houston
Oakland at Minnesota
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Jets
San Diego at Jacksonville
Tampa Bay at Atlanta
Washington at Dallas
N.Y. Giants at Detroit
St. Louis at San Francisco
Chicago at Seattle
Monday, Nov. 19
Tennessee at Denver



WEEK 12

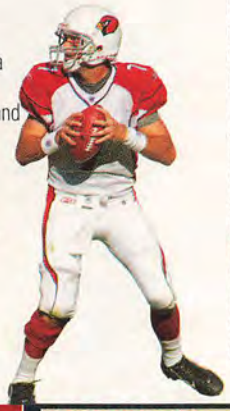
Thursday, Nov. 22
Green Bay at Detroit
N.Y. Jets at Dallas
Indianapolis at Atlanta
Sunday, Nov. 25
Buffalo at Jacksonville
Denver at Chicago
Houston at Cleveland
Minnesota at N.Y. Giants
New Orleans at Carolina
Oakland at Kansas City
Seattle at St. Louis
Tennessee at Cincinnati
Washington at Tampa Bay
San Francisco at Arizona
Baltimore at San Diego
Philadelphia at New England
Monday, Nov. 26
Miami at Pittsburgh

WEEK 13

Thursday, Nov. 29
Green Bay at Dallas
Sunday, Dec. 2
Atlanta at St. Louis
Buffalo at Washington
Detroit at Minnesota
Houston at Tennessee
Jacksonville at Indianapolis
N.Y. Jets at Miami
San Diego at Kansas City
Seattle at Philadelphia
San Francisco at Carolina
Tampa Bay at New Orleans
Cleveland at Arizona
Denver at Oakland
N.Y. Giants at Chicago
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh
Monday, Dec. 3
New England at Baltimore

WEEK 14

Thursday, Dec. 6
Chicago at Washington
Sunday, Dec. 9
Carolina at Jacksonville
Dallas at Detroit
Miami at Buffalo
N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia
Oakland at Green Bay
Pittsburgh at New England
San Diego at Tennessee
St. Louis at Cincinnati
Tampa Bay at Houston
Arizona at Seattle
Minnesota at San Francisco
Cleveland at N.Y. Jets
Kansas City at Denver
Indianapolis at Baltimore
Monday, Dec. 10
New Orleans at Atlanta



WEEK 15

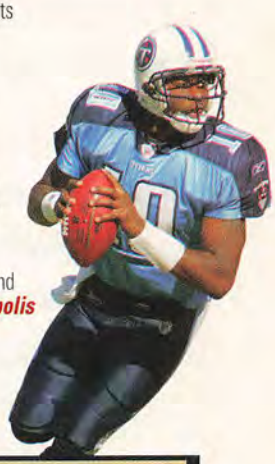
Thursday, Dec. 13
Denver at Houston
Saturday, Dec. 15
Cincinnati at San Francisco
Sunday, Dec. 16
Arizona at New Orleans
Atlanta at Tampa Bay
Baltimore at Miami
Buffalo at Cleveland
Green Bay at St. Louis
Jacksonville at Pittsburgh
N.Y. Jets at New England
Seattle at Carolina
Tennessee at Kansas City
Indianapolis at Oakland
Detroit at San Diego
Philadelphia at Dallas
Washington at N.Y. Giants
Monday, Dec. 17
Chicago at Minnesota

WEEK 16

Thursday, Dec. 20
Pittsburgh at St. Louis
Saturday, Dec. 22
Dallas at Carolina
Sunday, Dec. 23
Cleveland at Cincinnati
Green Bay at Chicago
Houston at Indianapolis
Kansas City at Detroit
Miami at New England
N.Y. Giants at Buffalo
Oakland at Jacksonville
Philadelphia at New Orleans
Washington at Minnesota
Atlanta at Arizona
Baltimore at Seattle
N.Y. Jets at Tennessee
Tampa Bay at San Francisco
Monday, Dec. 24
Denver at San Diego

WEEK 17

Saturday, Dec. 29
New England at N.Y. Giants
Sunday, Dec. 30
Buffalo at Philadelphia
Carolina at Tampa Bay
Cincinnati at Miami
Dallas at Washington
Detroit at Green Bay
Jacksonville at Houston
New Orleans at Chicago
Pittsburgh at Baltimore
Seattle at Atlanta
San Francisco at Cleveland
Tennessee at Indianapolis
Minnesota at Denver
San Diego at Oakland
St. Louis at Arizona
Kansas City at N.Y. Jets



POSTSEASON

Wild Card Weekend
Saturday, Jan. 5
AFC Wild Card Game (NBC)
NFC Wild Card Game (NBC)
Sunday, Jan. 6
AFC Wild Card Game (CBS)
NFC Wild Card Game (FOX)

Divisional Playoffs
Saturday, Jan. 12
AFC Divisional Playoff Game (CBS)
NFC Divisional Playoff Game (FOX)
Sunday, Jan. 13
AFC Divisional Playoff Game (CBS)
NFC Divisional Playoff Game (FOX)

Conference Championships
Sunday, Jan. 20
AFC Championship Game (CBS)
NFC Championship Game (FOX)

Super Bowl XLII
Sunday, Feb. 3
University of Phoenix Stadium
Glendale, Ariz.
AFC Champion vs. NFC Champion (FOX)

AFC-NFC Pro Bowl
Sunday, Feb. 10
Aloha Stadium
Honolulu, Hawaii

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BILLS

General manager Marv Levy and coach Dick Jauron have kicked into high gear a youth movement they started a year ago when five rookies filled starting assignments. Eleven veterans, nine who started games for the Bills and played in a combined 975 NFL games, were released, traded or not re-signed. They included four of the team's biggest stars: running back Willis McGahee, cornerback Nate Clements and linebackers London Fletcher-Baker and Takeo Spikes.

Already one of the NFL's youngest teams, the Bills' decision to become even younger was like a teenager undergoing plastic surgery. "That hasn't always been my philosophy, a youth movement," Levy says. "But I think that's the way it goes in the NFL these days."

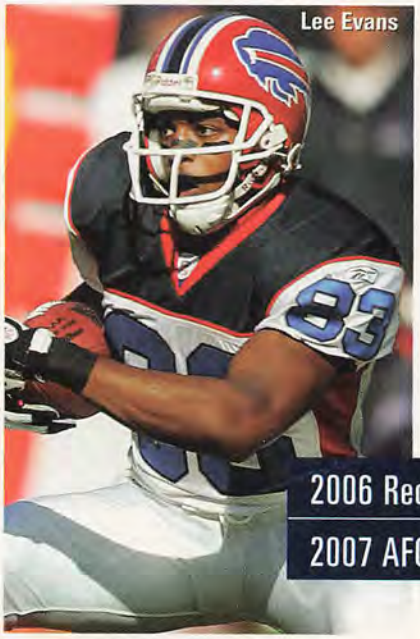
The replacements for McGahee and Fletcher-Baker are as young as it gets: rookies Marshawn Lynch and Paul Posluszny, the team's top two draft picks.

Overall, Buffalo will have a dozen starters with three years or less of NFL experience.

Quarterbacks After winning the starting job outright in training camp, J.P. Losman made great strides in his third season. Thanks to a strong second half, the 2004 first-round pick finished 11th in the NFL in passer rating (84.9), fifth in the AFC in touchdowns (19), and sixth in completion percentage (62.5). "I'm excited. For the first time here I get to start the season as the starting quarterback with the same offense and basically the same players," says Losman, whose decision-making and accuracy improved dramatically from his erratic 2005 season. "We get to critique what we did wrong and amplify what we did right." The Bills return the majority of their offensive personnel, but Losman will need a better running game to complement his passing for him to stay on course. Craig Nall inherits the No. 2 job after veteran Kelly Holcomb was part of a trade package with Spikes to Philadelphia.

Running Backs Lynch, the 12th overall pick in the draft and the Pac-10 Offensive Player of the Year, replaces McGahee as the Bills' No. 1 running back, and frankly, the cleats aren't that big to fill. McGahee failed to top 100 yards rushing in 21 of his last 24 starts in Buffalo and didn't reach 1,000 yards last year. The 5'11", 217-pound Lynch has been described as a poor man's LaDainian Tomlinson. He's nimble as well as powerful and can catch and throw. At Cal, he rushed for 3,230 yards (6.6 yard average) and caught 68 passes for 600 yards for a combined 35 touchdowns. In addition to running behind a remodeled line, Lynch will have the benefit of learning from classy veteran Anthony Thomas, the NFL's 2001 Offensive Rookie of the Year with Chicago, who has ably settled into a backup role. The Bills will not use a fullback in 2007, instead interchanging tight ends Brad Cieslak or Ryan Neufeld when a traditional two-back set is called for.

Receivers Lee Evans erased what little doubts existed that he could be a No. 1 go-to man after replacing Eric Moulds, catching 82 passes for 1,292 yards and eight touchdowns.


Lee Evans

Possessing rare speed and hands, he's equally dangerous on fly routes or hitch-and-goes. Unfortunately for Buffalo, the talent level of this unit drops a significant notch to Peerless Price, Josh Reed and Roscoe Parrish. That trio combined for 106 catches, 1,132 yards and seven TDs with Price averaging only 8.2 yards per catch in the No. 2 role. Each has the potential to improve his game in year two of this offense, however. Parrish, one of the NFL's fastest players, hauled in TD bombs of 51 and 44 yards a year ago. At tight end, young veteran Robert Royal looks to improve on his 23-catch season, while former University of Miami star Kevin Everett faces a make-or-break camp. If Buffalo's line is better, its tight ends won't have to stay in and block as much and can become a bigger part of the passing game.

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE BILLS

The Bills continue to get younger, quicker and faster, but are they any better? Making the playoffs in 2007 and snapping a seven-year playoff drought will be a stiff challenge with a lineup that figures to feature a dozen starters having played in the NFL three years or less, including four second-year players and two rookies. Only three starters will be 30 years old, and that's if wide receiver Peerless Price can hang onto his job in camp. Making that challenge even tougher is that Buffalo drew the league's toughest schedule, highlighted by the club's first home Monday Night Football game since 1994. Clearly, though, the Bills are a team building for the long-term and won't be an easy out for any opponent given their sound coaching, big-strike ability on offense, pass rush on defense and best special teams in the NFL. Led by quarterback J.P. Losman and wide receiver Lee Evans, the Bills scored more than 20 points in six of their final seven games a year ago. The addition of versatile rookie running back Marshawn Lynch and guard Derrick Dockery should improve the running game, ranked 27th. Defensively, Buffalo returns one of the league's top pass rushers in Aaron Schobel and hopes to improve the league's 28th-ranked defense against the run with the additions of veteran defensive tackle Darwin Walker and rookie linebacker Paul Posluszny.

2006 Record: 7–9

2007 AFC East Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Denver	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	at Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at New England	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Oct.	8	Dallas	8:30 pm
Week	6	BYE	
Oct.	21	Baltimore	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	at N.Y. Jets	4:05 pm
Nov.	4	Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	at Miami	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	New England	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	at Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Washington	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	Miami	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	at Cleveland	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	N.Y. Giants	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	at Philadelphia	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Evans, Losman: Paul Spinelli/Getty Images

Bills QB
J.P. Losman

Aaron Schobel

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Calling signals Quarterback J.P. Losman spent part of his offseason traveling through Mexico and Australia. A native of Southern California, he toured Mexico with a cousin, Michael Soto. "I got to see the whole country," Losman says. "Me and my cousin, who spoke a lot more Spanish than I did, was a big help. We were in some areas where we got lost and where you really want to know Spanish. It was definitely fun."

Youth is served Buffalo, Houston and Green Bay were the only teams in the NFL with five rookies who started seven games or more. Buffalo's impact rookies were free safety Ko Simpson (15), strong safety Donte Whitner (14), defensive tackle Kyle Williams (11), right tackle Terrence Pennington (nine) and linebacker Keith Ellison (seven).

Mama's Boy First-round pick Marshawn Lynch and his mom, Delisa, are a package deal; he plans to relocate her from a tough neighborhood in North Oakland, Calif., to Buffalo so she can live with him. "My mom works for a telephone company," Lynch says. "(The Bills) told me they had a bingo hall and a telephone company there, so my mom is going to be solid. It's going to be a little bit harder for us to adapt to the cold, but other than that, we should be solid."

Offensive Linemen The Bills, who allowed 47 sacks and ranked 30th overall in yards, addressed this chronically weak position by doling out more than $15 million in signing bonus money to veteran free agents Derrick Dockery, Langston Walker and Jason Whittle. Dockery, who started 61 games for Washington, was the big fish. With the 6'6", 335-pound guard paired with rising star tackle Jason Peters, the Bills will have a formidable left side. Walker, who started all 16 games for the Raiders last season, will take over at right tackle with underrated Melvin Fowler returning to center and rising third-year pro Duke Preston to right guard. Depth is the best it has been in many years with tackle Terrance Pennington (nine starts as a rookie), Brad Butler and Aaron Merz all solid prospects. Whittle, a nine-year veteran, will push Preston and can play center if need be.

Defensive Linemen One of Buffalo's strongest units figures to get better with the addition of veteran tackle Darwin Walker, who arrived in the Spikes trade from the Eagles. In their Tampa 2 scheme, the Bills like their tackles big and quick to attack the gaps. Walker, durable and consistent, fits that mold and will be part of a rotation that includes Larry Tripplett, Tim Anderson, Jason Jefferson and rambunctious second-year pro Kyle Williams, who as a rookie led all Bills interior linemen with 42 tackles. Buffalo kept its formidable trio of pass-rushing ends intact by re-signing Chris Kelsay to an eye-popping deal that pays him $12 million this year in total compensation. Kelsay, Ryan Denney, Anthony Hargrove and Aaron Schobel formed a defensive end rotation that accumulated 27 sacks, fourth-best in the NFL. Schobel, who finished third in sacks overall, thrived in Buffalo's new system that gives him more one-on-one matchups, finishing with career marks for sacks and earning his first Pro Bowl berth.

Linebackers Entering last season, Spikes, Fletcher-Baker and Jeff Posey formed one of the league's best trios. Now all three are history, replaced by Keith Ellison, Posluszny and Angelo Crowell. The talented Crowell, who sat out the final four games of 2006 after breaking his leg, still finished third in tackles with 95 after compiling 125 the year before. The drafting of Posluszny allows Crowell to remain at the weak outside spot where his versatility in coverage is an asset. Ellison earned seven emergency starts as a rookie and finished with 61 tackles, a sack, an interception and fumble recovery. At 228 pounds, he's somewhat undersized, but his speed works to his advantage in this defense. Posluszny, meanwhile, has rekindled memories in Buffalo of another product from Linebacker U., Shane Conlan. At 6'1", 238, the blue-collar Posluszny brings much-needed size to the middle of a unit that was 28th against the run (141 yards per game). Mario Haggan, Josh Stamer, Roy Manning and John DiGiorgio provide good depth.

Defensive Backs The Bills finished seventh against the pass a year ago but will be hard-pressed to repeat that ranking without Clements. Sliding into his right corner spot is untested second-year pro Ashton Youboty, who will be pushed in camp by veterans Kiwaukee Thomas and Jabari Greer. Fifth-year pro Terrence McGee, coming off a sub-par year, returns at left corner. The safety spots are manned by Donte Whitner and Ko Simpson, who started as rookies and acquitted themselves very well with 107 and 92 tackles, respectively, to go with a combined three interceptions. If Buffalo is better against the run, opponents figure to test Whitner and Simpson more. Coy Wire and Jim Leonhard are key reserves.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Lee Evans, WR
Five of his eight scores last year came in the second half of the season.
J.P. Losman, QB
Strong finish with 13 of his 19 touchdown passes last year coming in the second half of the season.

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Specialists The Bills enjoy enviable peace of mind here. Rian Lindell (83.04 percent) is the team's all-time most accurate placekicker, Brian Moorman (43.47) the all-time punting average leader and McGee (4,276) the all-time kickoff return leader. Toss in Parrish (11.4 yards), third among NFL punt returners, and solid coverage units, and Buffalo can win games with its special teams.

Coaching Staff The Bills, who established a franchise mark for fewest penalties, were clearly a better-coached team under Jauron. His experience, patience and understated style are suited for the job, and players clearly like playing for him. After working wonders with Losman, offensive coordinator Steve Fairchild will look to expand his offense. After starting five rookies at times, defensive coordinator Perry Fewell will still have one of the NFL's youngest units. Takeaways and run defense must improve, but Buffalo was 10th in points allowed and has a ton of speed to throw at teams.

Schobel, Losman: Paul Levy

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
7	Losman, JP	QB	6'2"	212	3	Tulane	D1b-04
16	Nall, Craig	QB	6'3"	230	5	Northwestern State	FA-GB-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
45	Jackson, Fred	RB	6'1"	208	1	Coe College	FA-06
31	Shelton, Daimon	FB	6'0"	271	9	Sacramento State	FA-04
28	Thomas, Anthony	RB	6'2"	222	6	Michigan	FA-NO-06
36	Williams, Shaud	RB	5'7"	191	3	Alabama	FA-04
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
89	Aiken, Sam	WR	6'2"	215	4	North Carolina	D4b-03
86	Cieslak, Brad	TE	6'3"	252	1	Northern Illinois	FA-05
83	Evans, Lee	WR	5'10"	197	3	Wisconsin	D1a-04
85	Everett, Kevin	TE	6'4"	253	1	Miami	D3-05
87	Murphy, Matt	TE	6'5"	264	4	Maryland	FA-06
88	Neufeld, Ryan	TE	6'4"	256	6	UCLA	FA-03
11	Parrish, Roscoe	WR	5'9"	169	2	Miami	D2-05
81	Price, Peerless	WR	5'11"	194	8	Tennessee	FA-Dal-06
82	Reed, Josh	WR	5'10"	211	5	LSU	D2a-02
84	Royal, Robert	TE	6'4"	254	4	LSU	FA-Was-06
15	Wilson, George	WR	6'0"	205	2	Arkansas	FA-04
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
60	Butler, Brad	OL	6'7"	307	1	Virginia	D5b-06
66	Dockery, Derrick	G	6'6"	335	4	Texas	FA-Was-07
67	Fowler, Melvin	C	6'3"	296	5	Maryland	FA-Min-06
74	Hand, Randy	OL	6'6"	310	1	Florida	FA-06
62	Merz, Aaron	OL	6'4"	322	1	California	D7b-06
79	Pennington, Terrance	T	6'7"	329	1	New Mexico	D7a-06
71	Peters, Jason	T	6'4"	340	3	Arkansas	FA-04
75	Preston, Duke	G	6'5"	311	2	Illinois	D4-05
70	Stith, Walter	OL	6'9"	320	1	North Carolina A&T	FA-06
68	Walker, Langston	T	6'8"	345	5	California	FA-Oak-07
65	Whittle, Jason	C/G	6'4"	305	9	SW Missouri St.	FA-Min-07
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
77	Anderson, Tim	DT	6'3"	314	3	Ohio State	D3-04
92	Denney, Ryan	DE	6'7"	264	5	BYU	D2b-02
93	Hargrove, Anthony	DE	6'3"	272	3	Georgia Tech	T-StL-06
99	Jefferson, Jason	DT	6'1"	295	2	Wisconsin	FA-05
90	Kelsay, Chris	DE	6'4"	257	4	Nebraska	D2-03
97	McCargo, John	DT	6'2"	307	1	NC State	D1b-06
72	Neill, Ryan	DL	6'3"	250	1	Rutgers	FA-06
91	Powell, Eric	DL	6'3"	267	1	Florida State	FA-05
94	Schobel, Aaron	DE	6'4"	243	6	TCU	D2a-01
98	Tripplett, Larry	DT	6'2"	293	5	Washington	FA-Ind-06
96	Walker, Darwin	DT	6'3"	294	7	Tennessee	T-Phi-07
95	Williams, Kyle	DT	6'1"	298	1	LSU	D5a-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
55	Crowell, Angelo	LB	6'1"	234	4	Virginia	D3-03
52	DiGiorgio, John	LB	6'2"	229	1	Saginaw Valley St.	FA-06
56	Ellison, Keith	LB	6'0"	228	1	Oregon State	D6-06
53	Haggan, Mario	LB	6'3"	254	4	Mississippi State	D7-03
50	Harrison, Kevin	LB	6'0"	256	1	Eastern Michigan	FA-06
96	Manning, Roy	LB	6'2"	245	2	Michigan	FA-06
57	Stamer, Josh	LB	6'2"	236	4	South Dakota	FA-03
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
43	Bassey, Eric	CB	6'1"	200	1	Oklahoma	FA-06
33	Greer, Jabari	CB	5'11"	177	3	Tennessee	FA-04
42	Leonhard, Jim	S	5'8"	190	2	Wisconsin	FA-05
24	McGee, Terrence	CB	5'9"	208	4	Northwestern State	D4a-03
30	Simpson, Ko	S	6'1"	201	1	South Carolina	D4-06
25	Thomas, Kiwaukee	DB	5'11"	194	7	Georgia	FA-Mia-06
20	Whitner, Donte	S	5'10"	206	1	Ohio State	D1-06
27	Wire, Coy	S	6'0"	220	5	Stanford	D3-02
26	Youboty, Ashton	CB	5'11"	189	1	Ohio State	D3-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
9	Lindell, Rian	K	6'3"	230	7	Washington State	FA-Sea-03
8	Moorman, Brian	P	6'0"	172	6	Pittsburg State	FA-01
54	Schneck, Mike	LS	6'1"	233	8	Wisconsin	FA-05

Head Coach: Dick Jauron (43–58, 0–1 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Steve Fairchild
Defensive Coordinator: Perry Fewell

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	83	Lee Evans
WR	81	Peerless Price
LT	71	Jason Peters
LG	**66**	**Derrick Dockery**
C	67	Melvin Fowler
RG	75	Duke Preston
RT	**68**	**Langston Walker**
TE	84	Robert Royal
HB	86	Brad Cieslak
QB	7	J.P. Losman
RB	**23**	**Marshawn Lynch**

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	90	Chris Kelsay
DT	98	Larry Tripplett
DT	**96**	**Darwin Walker**
DE	94	Aaron Schobel
SLB	56	Keith Ellison
MLB	**51**	**Paul Posluszny**
WLB	55	Angelo Crowell
CB	24	Terrence McGee
CB	26	Ashton Youboty
SS	20	Donte Whitner
FS	30	Ko Simpson

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	9	Rian Lindell
P	8	Brian Moorman

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
RB	28	Anthony Thomas
WR	82	Josh Reed
WR	11	Roscoe Parrish
DE	92	Ryan Denney
CB	25	Kiwaukee Thomas

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Training Camp: St. John Fisher College (Rochester, NY)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

G	Derrick Dockery (Was)
DT	Darwin Walker (Phi)
T	Langston Walker (Oak)
C/G	Jason Whittle (Min)

Key Losses

CB	Nate Clements (SF)
LB	London Fletcher-Baker (Was)
QB	Kelly Holcomb (Phi)
RB	Willis McGahee (Bal)
FB	Daimon Shelton (FA)
LB	Takeo Spikes (Phi)
G	Chris Villarrial (Retired)

2007 Draft

1.	Marshawn Lynch	RB	5'11"	217	California
2.	Paul Posluszny	OLB	6'1"	238	Penn State
3.	Trent Edwards	QB	6'3"	222	Stanford
4.	Dwayne Wright	RB	5'11"	226	Fresno State
6.	John Wendling	FS	6'1"	222	Wyoming
7.	Derek Schouman	FB	6'2"	247	Boise State
7.	C.J. Ah You	DE	6'4"	274	Oklahoma

The Bills lost four of their biggest stars in McGahee, Clements, Spikes and Fletcher-Baker, but many insiders believe that only Clements will be missed. Clements consistently took out the opponents' No. 1 receiver, holding him to an average of 4.75 catches for 58 yards, and nobody on the current roster comes close to his talent. Free agent signings were modest yet again for the cost-conscious Bills, but Dockery was among the best offensive guards available and GM Marv Levy struck early for him. Paired with Jason Peters, he will give Buffalo a scary left side for new running back Lynch to work behind. Lynch brings more versatility to the table than McGahee, who failed to top 1,000 yards and was dealt to Baltimore. Posluszny, the Butkus Award winner and all-time leading tackler at Penn State, brings size to the middle of a defense that ranked 28th against the run and wilted on the ground late in too many games.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
J.P. Losman	429	268	3,051	19	14
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Willis McGahee*	259	990	3.8	6	
Anthony Thomas	107	378	3.5	2	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Lee Evans	82	1,292	15.8	8	
Peerless Price	49	402	8.2	3	
Josh Reed	34	410	12.1	2	
Roscoe Parrish	23	320	13.9	2	

Kicking: Rian Lindell, 23-25 FGs, 33-33 XPs, 102 points
Tackles: London Fletcher-Baker*, 146; Donte Whitner, 107
Sacks: Aaron Schobel, 14
Interceptions: London Fletcher-Baker*, 4
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (7–9)

Sept.	10	at New England	L	17–19
Sept.	17	at Miami	W	16– 6
Sept.	24	N.Y. Jets	L	20–28
Oct.	1	Minnesota	W	17–12
Oct.	8	at Chicago	L	7–40
Oct.	15	at Detroit	L	17–20
Oct.	22	New England	L	6–28
Nov.	5	Green Bay	W	24–10
Nov.	12	at Indianapolis	L	16–17
Nov.	19	at Houston	W	24–21
Nov.	26	Jacksonville	W	27–24
Dec.	3	San Diego	L	21–24
Dec.	10	at N.Y. Jets	W	31–13
Dec.	17	Miami	W	21– 0
Dec.	24	Tennessee	L	29–30
Dec.	31	at Baltimore	L	7–19

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	266.9	30	-55.2
Rushing	97.0	27	-20.3
Passing	169.9	28	-34.9
Scoring	18.8	23	-1.9
Punt Returns	10.8	5	+2.1
Kick Returns	23.9	6	+1.4
Red Zone TD %	42.9	26	-7.9
Defense			
Total Defense	329.6	18	+7.5
Against Rush	140.9	28	+23.6
Against Pass	188.7	7	-16.1
Points Allowed	19.4	10	-1.3
Interceptions	13	24	-3.3
Sacks	40	8T	+3.7
Turnover Diff.	-5	23T	-

DOLPHINS

On April 28, 2007, hundreds of Dolphins fans congregated in the practice bubble in Davie, to celebrate the first slate of draft picks of the Cam Cameron era. When Cameron appeared to discuss the selection of receiver Ted Ginn Jr., rather than quarterback Brady Quinn, most of those fans booed. Around here, it doesn't take very long for the bubble to burst.

Cameron is faced with overcoming the sins of his predecessors. Nick Saban arrived as a savior in 2005 and, after he went 9–7 and acquired Daunte Culpepper, many prognosticators forecast the Dolphins to compete for a Super Bowl in 2006. Instead, everything went wrong. Culpepper, immobile after major knee surgery, took 21 sacks in four games. The team started 1–6. Saban, after insisting he would not leave to coach Alabama, left to coach Alabama.

H. Wayne Huizenga, who had given Saban total control, chose a novel approach in an effort to end a five-season playoff drought. The owner promoted general manager Randy Mueller, granting him final say over personnel, after Mueller had acted in a subservient role to Saban. After an extensive search, Huizenga chose to hire a head coach with an offensive background for the first time in the franchise's history — Cameron, who had served as the coordinator of the San Diego Chargers' top-ranked scoring unit. Now Cameron must win games, and the fans' trust.

Quarterbacks The Dolphins pursued the wrong quarterback after the 2005 season. Drew Brees recovered from shoulder surgery to lead the Saints to the NFC Championship game while Culpepper struggled during his four starts and eventually had another surgery (for a kneecap injury). Cameron is known as a quarterback guru so it was not surprising that, upon taking the Dolphins' job, he began seeking other solutions. Joey Harrington is gone. As of mid-May, Culpepper remained on the roster, but he won't be ready until training camp at the earliest. That left the Dolphins trying to work out a trade with the Chiefs for Trent Green, who has a history with Cameron, but who will be 37 by opening day. Green would be a stopgap as the team develops second-round pick John Beck. The Dolphins passed on Quinn largely because of their high grade on the former BYU star, whose best attribute is his accuracy. Also on hand: Cleo Lemon, a former Charger who fared reasonably well while starting the 2006 season finale.

Running Backs Can Ronnie Brown handle the load? Brown has averaged only 224 carries the past two years. He runs hard, blocks well, and has good hands, but he has yet to emerge as a dynamic threat. Cameron showed in San Diego that he likes to use a second back, even when the first is LaDainian Tomlinson. The Dolphins were hoping Ricky Williams could be that second back, but he reportedly failed a drug test in April and will not be allowed to apply for reinstatement until September. With Williams out of the picture, Lorenzo Booker, a third-round pick out of Florida State, could take on a larger-than-expected role. Veteran Cory Schlesinger and enormous rookie Reagan Mauia will vie to be the lead blocker.

Chris Chambers

Receivers Chris Chambers finally fulfilled his potential in 2005, making his first Pro Bowl with a flourish in the final six weeks. Few expected him to flop as he did in 2006. Chambers caught only four touchdowns — one off his career low — and gained more than 66 receiving yards in only one contest. While he was a victim of inconsistent quarterbacking, and a lack of chemistry with Harrington, Chambers must rebound this season or he will be replaced. Marty Booker actually was more productive than Chambers, but the Dolphins put him on the trading block this offseason. They also sent Wes Welker to New England and cut tight end Randy McMichael. So there are opportunities aplenty. Derek Hagan showed

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE DOLPHINS

Nick Saban was supposed to lead the Dolphins to a Super Bowl. Instead, he led the once-proud franchise deeper into the abyss. When he left to coach Alabama, he left an aging and unimpressive roster. Randy Mueller, who did good work in New Orleans and Seattle, and Cam Cameron began reshaping the offense this offseason. They put a premium on speed, a necessary change after the Dolphins slogged through the Jimmy Johnson, Dave Wannstedt and Saban eras. But there's that nagging quarterback question: Daunte Culpepper, Trent Green, John Beck or Cleo Lemon? While Dom Capers' retention means the defense should remain strong, several of the key players (Zach Thomas, Jason Taylor, Joey Porter, Keith Traylor, Vonnie Holliday) are on the wrong side of 30, and there are questions about the secondary in general, and about the depth on the defensive line and at linebacker. Plus, the schedule doesn't help. The Dolphins not only give up a home game to travel to London to play the Giants on Oct. 28, but they also play four games in cold-weather cities between Nov. 18 and Dec. 23. Dolphins fans, historically impatient, might need to settle for slow and steady improvement, because the playoffs appear at least two years away.

2006 Record: 6–10

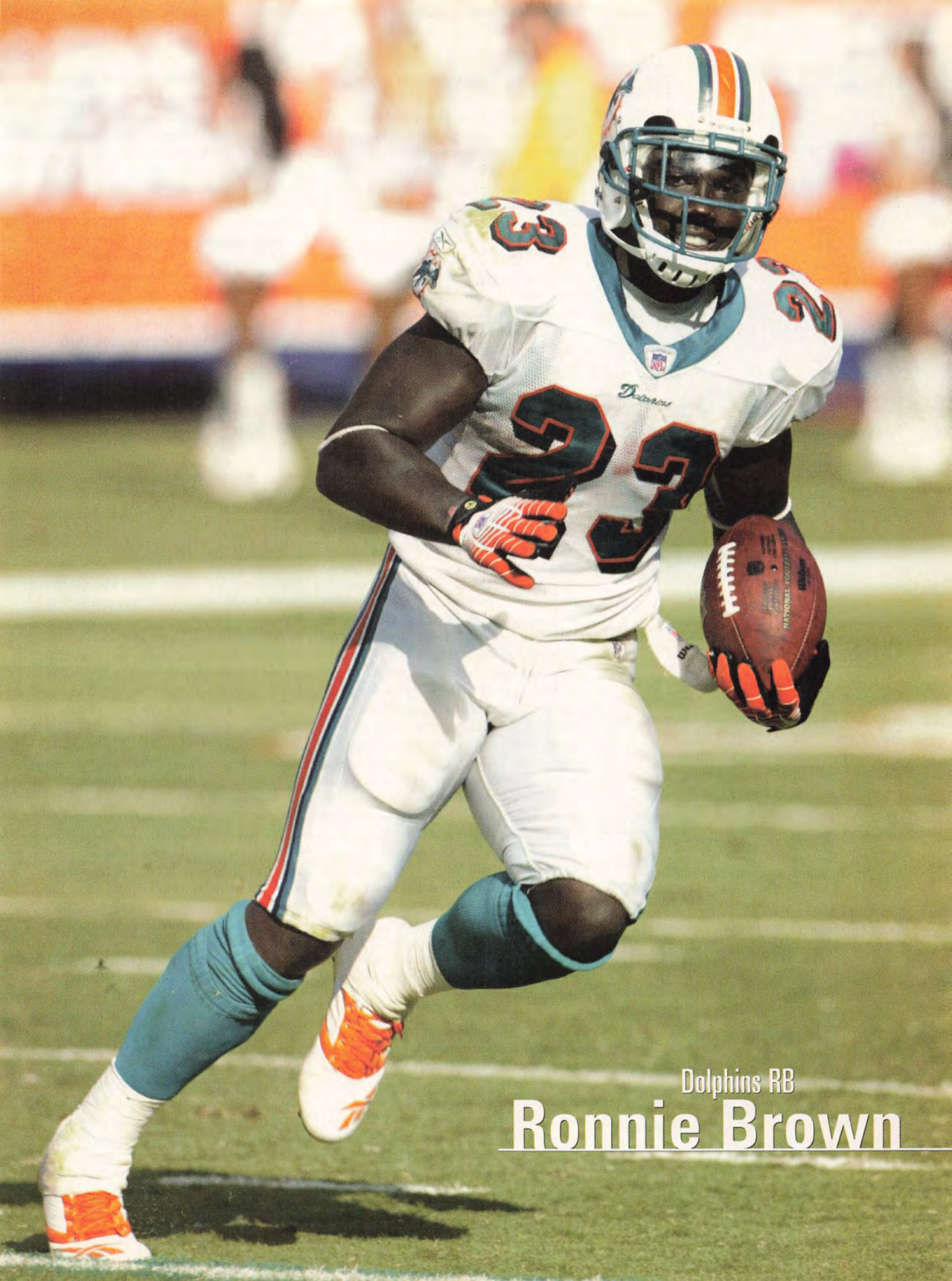
2007 AFC East Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Washington	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	Dallas	4:05 pm
Sept.	23	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	Oakland	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	at Houston	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Cleveland	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	New England	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	#N.Y. Giants	1:00 pm
Week 9		BYE	
Nov.	11	Buffalo	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Nov.	26	at Pittsburgh	8:30 pm
Dec.	2	N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at Buffalo	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Baltimore	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at New England	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	Cincinnati	1:00 pm
		#London, England	

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Chambers: Karl Wright/ US Presswire
Brown: Larry Kirker



Dolphins RB

Ronnie Brown

Zach Thomas

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Get in here H. Wayne Huizenga vowed that the Dolphins' first-round choice would be signed by the time 2007 training camp begins. The only problem? He promised the same thing last year, and Jason Allen held out. Ted Ginn Jr. promised he wouldn't make the owner eat his words again.

Long drought Since the Dolphins last reached the AFC Championship game in January 1993, nearly every franchise in the AFC has gone that far. The only exceptions? Cincinnati, expansion Cleveland (formed in 1999) and Houston (formed in 2002). Somehow, the Dolphins still have the top NFL record since 1970, winning at a .623 clip.

Down to two You can't blame Jason Taylor and Zach Thomas for feeling lonely. Drafted in 1997 and 1996, respectively, they are the only two players remaining from the Jimmy Johnson era (1996-99).

Long history Cam Cameron has known Ginn since Ginn was 13 years old. While serving as the head coach at Indiana, Cameron developed a friendship with Ginn's father, who was head coach at Glenville High in Cleveland.

Down to one Dave Wannstedt and Rick Spielman drafted nine players in '03. Only one, sixth-rounder Yeremiah Bell, is still around.

in his rookie season that he can get open but also his tendency to drop the ball. Ginn was regarded as the fastest player in the draft, but he's slight. Can he get off the line against bump-and-run coverage? Cameron developed Antonio Gates into an elite receiving tight end. Can he do the same with David Martin, who started 21 games in six seasons with the Packers?

Offensive Linemen This has been a work in progress for longer than fans care to remember, and it remains so. The line improved somewhat after a disastrous start to 2006, with much of that attributable to the insertion of Harrington, whose mandate was to get rid of the ball quickly. Vernon Carey, who emerged as the most consistent player on the line in his third season, will shift from right tackle to left tackle. Rex Hadnot will play either center or guard. Hudson Houck, a respected line coach, must then sort out the rest. L.J. Shelton, who failed at left tackle, could play right tackle or right guard. Four young players (Anthony Alabi, Joe Toledo and draft picks Samson Satele and Drew Mormino) are all in the mix to start.

Defensive Linemen Just when most thought Jason Taylor couldn't get better, he did, winning the NFL's Defensive Player of the Year award at age 32. Taylor had 13.5 sacks, and leads all NFL players in the category over the past seven years. A deadly combination of energy and athleticism, Taylor adjusted seamlessly to Dom Capers' hybrid 4-3/3-4 defense, and only figures to be more of a force in his second season in the system. The Dolphins re-signed veteran Vonnie Holliday after a season that Taylor thought should have earned Holliday a Pro Bowl appearance. Holliday, undersized inside, held up extremely well there anyway, and he can also rush off the edge. Keith Traylor will be 38 when the season begins, but he won't be much smaller, so he remains a sturdy presence against the run. He will platoon with second-year player Fred Evans, who was a pleasant surprise as a seventh-round pick. The improving Matt Roth steps in for Kevin Carter as the other starting end.

Linebackers Undersized overachiever Zach Thomas has made it through 11 seasons, and by leading the league in tackles, he made it to his seventh Pro Bowl. Like Taylor, he quickly became a fan of Capers' defense, and he will be at the center of it again. Channing Crowder had a good second season, but more will be expected now of the intelligent, intense University of Florida product. He had 103 tackles and a sack, and now he needs to make more game-changing plays. Perhaps Joey Porter's presence will make that possible. Porter's production slipped in his final season in Pittsburgh. But the Dolphins quickly snatched him for $20 million in bonuses, attributing his struggles to a hamstring injury, and coveting his swagger, ferocity and playmaking. Donnie Spragan returns and will play some in the 3-4.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Ronnie Brown, RB
New head coach Cam Cameron is re-constructing Miami's O-line to help increase Brown's productivity.
David Martin, TE
A potential sleeper? Under utilized in Green Bay, Martin has the speed to get downfield.

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Defensive Backs The Dolphins still don't have a true No. 1 cornerback, and so they will rely on Will Allen, Travis Daniels and André Goodman. All are competent, but they combined for only two interceptions. In fact, Taylor and safety Renaldo Hill led the team with just two apiece. Yeremiah Bell, one of the few bright spots of the 2006 season, will start at free safety. He is always around the ball. Hill is a favorite to start at the strong spot, especially now that 2006 first-round choice Jason Allen has moved to corner. Allen has physical ability, but he held out and struggled to learn the defense.

Specialists The Dolphins signed Jay Feely to replace Olindo Mare as the placekicker, realizing they would lose something on kickoffs but hoping that the younger Feely would be more consistent than Mare has been the past three seasons. Feely was 23-of-27 last season, but his long was only 47 yards. Rookie Brandon Fields will have to be as adept as former punter Donnie Jones at pinning teams inside the 20. The electric Ginn replaces Welker on kick returns.

Coaching Staff The Dolphins have been a dull, sloppy offensive team for most of the past decade. That inspired Huizenga's hiring of Cameron, who will call his own plays. If he finds that burden to be too great, he can share responsibilities with Mike Mularkey, demoted from offensive coordinator to tight ends coach. The Dolphins added Terry Robiskie as the receivers coach. Capers received a healthy raise to run the No. 4-ranked defense again. He'll continue to go with a hybrid 4-3/3-4 scheme.

Thomas, Brown: Larry Kinker

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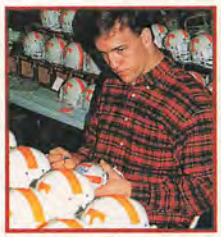

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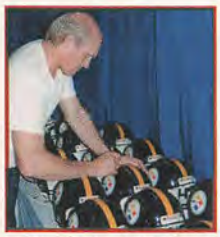

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Brown, Jim OFC $279 or Gold	$ 199	Leinart, Matt OFC	$ 299	Taylor, Lawrence OFC GTSM	$ 249
Brown, Ronnie OFC F.I.	$ 199	Lilly, Bob Dallas Logo w/HOF	$ 79	Theismann, Joe OFC w/ SB MVP	$ 219
Brunnell, Mark OFC RDM	$ 159	Manning, Eli OFC S.S.	$ 299	Thomas, Thurman OFC w/ MVP	$ 189
Bush, Reggie OFC B.HOLO	$ 349	Manning, Peyton OFC M.M.	$ 479	Tittle, Y.A. OFC w/ HOF	$ 189
Butkus, Dick OFC w/ HOF	$ 249	Marino, Dan OFC $399 or "Gold"	$ 329	Tomlinson, LaDainian OFC	$ 329
Campbell, Earl OFC w/ HOF	$ 199	McNabb, Donovan OFC SS	$ 299	Walker, Herschel GA Logo	$ 129
Dawson, Len OFC w/ HOF	$ 179	Montana, Joe OFC $299 or Gold	$ 249	Williams, Camell OFC $249 or Logo	$ 199
Dillon, Corey OFC $249 or Gold	$ 189	Moon, Warren OFC w/ HOF	$ 219	Williams, Ricky OFC	$ 149
Dilsa, Mike OFC w/HOF	$ 219	Namath, Joe OFC	$ 399	Winslow, Kellen OFC w/ HOF	$ 169
Dorsett, Tony OFC w/ HOF	$ 239	Palmer, Carson OFC P. Holo	$ 349	Woodson, Charles OFC	$ 189
Elway, John OFC M.M.	$ 429	Pennington, Chad OFC	$ 249	Young, Steve OFC w/HOF	$ 269
Favre, Brett OFC B.F. Hologram	$ 329	Peschel/Steet '69 Texas Logo	$ 109		
Fouts, Dan OFC w/HOF	$ 199	Plunkett, Jim OFC w/ SB MVP	$ 229		

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Brown, Jim OFC Cley $429 or Rep	$ 289	Moon, Warren OFC Oilers w/ HOF	$ 379
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Butkus, Dick OFC $399 or Rep	$ 249	Nebraska OFC 3-Sig Heisman	$ 349
Campbell, Earl OFC $379 or Rep	$ 259	Pennington, Chad OFC Jets/Marsh	$ 389
Dallas 3X SB Champs Team (31 Sigs)	$1,399	Plunkett, J. OFC Raid/Stanf $379 Rep	$ 239
Dawson, Len OFC KC $329 or Rep	$ 199	Porter, Clinton OFC Canes w/ '01 Champs	$ 379
Dickerson, E. OFC w/HOF $369 Rep	$ 229	Purple People Eaters OFC (4 Sigs)	$ 399
Dilsa, Mike OFC $379 or Rep	$ 249	Rice, Jerry OFC SF $399 or Rep	$ 299
Dorsett, Tony OFC $399 or Rep	$ 269	Riggins, John OFC Skins HOF	$ 449
Elway, John OFC $549 or Rep	$ 399	or Rep.	$ 339
Favre, Brett OFC $449 or Rep	$ 349	Romo, Tony Dallas Rep. TB	$ 299
Fouts, Dan OFC w/HOF $399 or Rep	$ 259	Sanders, Barry OFC $449 or Rep	$ 299
Gates, Antonio Chargers Rep	$ 199	Sayers, Gale OFC T.B. Bears/KU	$ 399
George, Eddie OFC Ohio St.	$ 379	Spurrier, Steve OFC FL $399 or Rep	$ 299
Griese, Bob OFC $369 or Rep	$ 229	Stabler, K. OFC Raid/Ala $369 or Rep	$ 229
Grossman, Ron OFC Bears/Florida SS	$ 399	Starr, Bart OFC GB/Alabama	$ 469
Ham, Jack OFC PSU $349 Steelers Rep.	$ 199	Staubach, Roger OFC $429 or Rep	$ 329
Harrison, Marvin Colts Rep.	$ 279	Steel Curtain OFC $399 or Rep	$ 279
Heisman Trophy Rep. w/ 14 Sigs	$ 629	Taylor, L. OFC Giants TB/HOF	$ 419
Hornung, Paul OFC Packers/Notre Dame	$ 359	Theismann, J. OFC Skins/ND	$ 379
Jackson, Bo OFC Aub $389 or Rep	$ 269	Thomas, T (Bills/OK.St.) OFC	$ 349
Jarrett, Dwayne USC Rep.	$ 199	Tittle, Y.A. OFC TB A.S. HOF	$ 349
Johnson, Larry OFC Chiefs/Penn State	$ 399	Tomlinson, LaDainian Chargers Rep.	$ 379
Johnson, Rudi OFC $349 Rep	$ 199	Vick, Michael OFC $459 or Rep	$ 299
Jones, Julius Dallas Rep	$ 239	Walker, Her OFC UGA $349 or Rep	$ 199
Jurgensen, Sonny OFC Redskins or Rep.	$ 429	Williams, Gaillac OFC Bucs/Aub $399 Rep	$ 259
Kelly, Jim OFC Bills/Ma GTSM	$ 399	Woodson, Charles OFC Mich w/ Hess	$ 369
Kosar, Bernie OFC Browns $369 Rep	$ 229	Wuerffel, Danny Gators Rep. w/ NSC	$ 209
		Young, Steve OFC SF TB w/HOF	$ 429

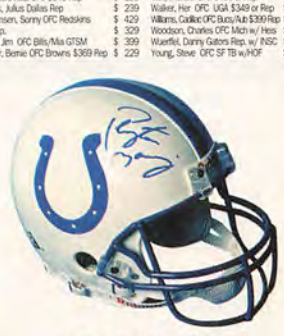
FOOTBALL MINI - HELMETS

Akman, Troy (S) DAL/UCLA	$199	Holmes, Santonio (R) OSU/Steelers	$ 69	Owens, Steve (R) Okla/Heis	$ 59
Allen, Marcus (R) USC/Raid	$109	Hornung, Paul (S) ND/Heis/GB	$ 89	Parrish, Roscoe (R) Canes/Bills	$ 59
Barber, Tiki (R) Giants/UVA	$189	Howard, Desmond (R) GB w/ SB MVP	$ 69	Parseghian, Ara (R) Notre Dame	$ 89
Bednarik, Chuck (R) Eagles HOF	$ 59	Jackson, Bo (R) Raiders/Aub	$149	Pennington, Ch. (R) Jets/Mar.	$149
Bolino, Joe (R) Navy/Heisman	$ 69	Jarrett, Dwayne (R) USC	$ 69	Perry, Chris (R) Mich/Cinn	$ 69
Berry, Raymond (S) Colts HOF	$ 69	Jaworski, Ron (R) Eagles TB	$ 69	Pittman, Michael (R) TSP Texas	$ 69
Bletnikoff, Fred (R) Raid/FSU	$ 79	Jenkins, Michael (R) OSU/Falcons	$ 69	Pihos, Phil (R) Eagles TB w/HOF	$ 59
Blanchard, Doc (R) Heisman	$79	Johnson, Bethel (R) TX A&M	$ 59	Plummer, Jake (R) Broncos	$ 79
Blanda, George (R) Raiders w/HOF	$ 99	Johnson, Key (R) Jets $29 or USC	$ 89	Plunkett, J. (R) Raid/Stan/Heis	$ 99
Blount, Mel (R) Steelers, w/HOF	$ 79	Johnson, Larry (R) Chiefs/Penn St	$119	Portis, Clinton (R) Skins/Canes	$ 99
Bowe, Dwayne (R) LSU	$69	Johnson, Rudi (R) Bengals	$ 79	Psilanti, J. (R) Raid/Stan/Heis	$ 99
Brees, Drew (R) Saints/Purdue	$129	Johnston, Daryl (R) Dallas	$ 69	Renfro, Mel (R) Dallas HOF	$ 59
Brown, Chris (R) Titans/Colorado	$59	Joner, Charlie (R) SD w/HOF	$ 65	Rice, Jerry (R) Raid/SF	$169
Brown, Jim (R) Cley/SY	$199	Jones, Deacon (R) HOF/Rams	$ 69	Rivers, Philip (R) NC State/S.D.	$139
Brown, Ronnie (R) Dolphins	$109	Jones, Ed "Too Tall" (R) A.S.	$ 69	Rodgers, Johnny (R) Neb/Heis	$ 69
Brown, Tim (R) Raid/ND	$ 99	Jones, Julius (R) ND/Dallas	$ 99	Rogers, Geo (R) SC/Heisman	$ 59
Bruce, Issac (R) Rams/MSU	$ 69	Jones, Kevin (R) Va. Tech/Lions	$ 69	Rolle, Antrel (R) U. Miami	$ 59
Brunell, Mark (S) WA Huskies	$119	Jones, Thom. (R) UVA/Bears	$ 79	Romo, Tony (R) Dallas	$169
Bullock, Keith (R) Titans/Sy	$ 79	Jones-Drew, M. (R) Jaguars/UCLA	$ 89	Rozier, Mike (R) Nebr./Heis.	$ 59
Buoniconti, Nick (R) MIA HOF	$ 69	Jurgensen, S. (R) Skins/Duke	$139	Salaam, R. (R) Col/Heisman	$ 69
Burress, Plaxico (R) Giants	$ 99	Kearse, Jevon (R) Gators	$ 89	Salisbury, Sean (R) USC/Vikings	$ 69
Bush, Reggie (R) USC/Saints	$199	Kelly, Jim (R) Bills/U.MA	$119	Sanders, Barry (R) Det/OSU	$199
Butkus, Dick (S) Bears/Illinois	$169	Kelly, Leroy (R) Clev. HOF	$ 59	Sayers, G. (R) Bears/Kansas	$ 89
Campbell, E (R) Oil/TX/Heis	$ 99	Kilmer, Billy (R) Skins/UCLA	$ 59	Selmon, LeRoy (R) OU/Bucs HOF	$ 69
Campbell, Jason (R) Aub/Skins	$ 79	Krause, Paul (R) Vik w/HOF	$ 69	Shockley, D.J. (R) U Georgia	$ 69
Cannon, Billy (R) LSU/Heisman	$ 69	Lambert, Jack (R) Steelers w/HOF	$119	Simms, Chris (R) Texas/Bucs	$ 89
Carter, Chris (R) Vikings	$ 79	Langer, Jim (R) Dolphins HOF	$ 59	Simms, Phil (R) NY Giants	$119
Cassady, H. (R) OSU/Heisman	$ 59	Lary, Yale (R) TX A&M/Lions	$ 59	Sims, Billy (R) Okla/Lions/Heis	$ 59
Chambers, Chris (R) Miami/Wisc	$ 65	Lattner, Johnny (R) ND/Heis	$ 59	Smith, Steve (R) Panthers	$109
Christensen, Todd (R) Raiders/BYU	$69	Lavelli, Dante (R) Clev/HOF/OSU	$ 59	Spears, Marcus (R) LSU	$ 59
Clark, Dwight (R) SF/Clemson	$ 69	Lavik, Chris (R) FL w/ '06 Champs	$ 89	Spurrier, Steve (R) Fla/HEIS	$109
Clausen, Casey (R) U of Tennessee	$69	Lefors, Stefan (R) Louisville	$ 59	Stabler, Ken (R) Raid/ALA	$ 99
Clayton, Michael (R) Bucs/LSU	$ 69	Leftwich, Byron (S) Jaguars	$139	Stallworth, Donte (R) U.T./Saints	$ 69
Couch, Tim (S) (KY)	$ 79	Leinart, Matt (R) USC/Cards	$199	Stallworth, John (R) Pitt HOF	$ 89
Crouch, Eric (R) Neb. Heisman	$69	Levy, Marv (R) Bills HOF	$ 69	Starr, Bart (R) Ala./GB HOF	$219
Crow, John David (R) TX A&M/Heis	$ 69	Little, Larry (R) Miami HOF	$ 59	Staubach, Roger (R) Dallas	$199
Davis, Willie (R) Packers HOF	$ 59	Lofton, James (R) GB/Bills/HOF	$ 69	Steel, Curtain (9) (4 Sigs) GTSM	$169
Dawson, L. (R) Pur/KC HOF	$ 89	Long, Howie (R) Raiders w/HOF	$109	Stenerud, Jan (R) Chiefs HOF	$ 59
Dent, Richard (R) Bears	$ 69	Lott, R. (R) Raid/SF/USC	$ 89	Stephenson, D. (R) Miami HOF	$ 69
Dickerson, Eric (S) Rams/SMU	$ 99	Lynch, John (R) Denver	$ 99	Sullivan, Pat (R) Auburn/Heis	$ 69
Dilsa, Mike (R) Bears/TE	$ 99	Mackey, John (C) Colts HOF	$ 59	Cappelletti, John Rams	$129
Dorsett, T. (R) Dal/Heis/Pitt	$109	Manning, Archie (R) MS/NO	$109	Taylor, Charley (R) Skins HOF	$ 59
Dyson, Kevin (R) Titans "MCM"	$ 69	Manning, Eli (R) NY/MS	$199	Taylor, Fred (R) Jags/FL	$ 89
Edwards, Braylon (R) MI/Browns	$109	Manning, Peyton (R) Colts/Vols	$299	Taylor, Lawrence (R) NY/UNC	$159
Evans, Lee (R) Bills/Wisc	$ 69	Marchetti, Gino (R) Colts w/HOF	$ 59	Theismann, J. (R) Skins/ND	$ 99
Faulk, Kevin (R) Patriots/LSU	$ 59	Marino, Dan (R) Mia/Pitt	$299	Thomas, Th. (R) Bills/OS St.	$ 89
Favre, Brett (R) Packers/So.Miss	$199	Maynard, Don (R) Jets TB HOF	$ 59	Tittle, YA (R) LSU/Giants	$ 79
Foote, Larry (R) Mich/Steelers	$ 69	McGahee, Willis (R) Bills/Canes	$ 99	Torretta, Gino (R) U of Miami/Heis	$ 59
Foreman, Chuck (R) Vik/J Miami	$ 69	McGee, Max (R) Packers TB	$ 49	Upshaw, Gene (R) Raiders HOF	$ 89
Fouts, Dan (R) Chargers HOF	$109	McGinest, Willie (R) USC or Patriots	$ 69	Vick, Michael (R) Atl/Vtech	$229
Gafney, J. (R) Gators/Texans	$ 69	McKinnon, Dennis (R) Bears	$ 59	Vilma, Jonathan (R) Jets/Canes	$ 69
Galloway, Joey (R) OSU/Bucs	$ 69	McMichael, Randy (R) Miami/UGA	$ 69	Walker, Her. (S) GA/Heis.	$ 99
Gamble, Chris (R) Ohio St/Panthers	$ 69	Meyer, Urban (R) Gators w/ '06 Champs	$109	Warrick, Peter (R) FSU/Cinn	$ 79
Gates, Antonio (R) Chargers	$ 99	Miller, Heath (R) Steelers/UVA	$ 89	Welker, Wes (R) Dolphins/Tx Tech	$ 69
George, E (R) OSU/Heis/Dal	$119	Mitchell, Bobby (R) Skins HOF	$ 69	White, Charles (R) USC/Heis	$ 59
Ginn, Ted Jr. (R) Ohio State	$79	Montana, Joe (R) SF/N.Dame	$199	White, Dwight (R) Dallas	$ 59
Gonzalez, Tony (R) Chiefs	$ 99	Moon, Warren (R) Oilers HOF	$ 99	White, Randy (R) Dal/Terps	$ 65
Grant, Deon (R) Jags/Vols	$ 59	Moore, Lenny (R) Colts/HOF	$ 59	White, Jason (R) OU/Heis	$ 75
Green, Ahman (R) GB/Neb	$ 89	Moreney, Versand (R) OK St/TX	$ 59	White, Randy (R) Dal/Terps	$ 65
Griese, Bob (R) Miami/Purdue	$109	Morrall, E. Colts/Mia (R) C.S.A.	$ 49	Williams, Camell (R) Bucs/Aub	$109
Griffin, Archie (R) OSU Heis	$ 79	Morris, Joe (R) Giants	$ 49	Williams, D.J. (R) Denver/Canes	$59
Grossman, Rex (R) Bears/Fla	$159	Moss, Sinorice (R) U. Miami/Giants	$ 59	Williams, DeAngelo (R) MSU/Car.	$ 79
Haley, Charles (R) Dallas	$ 59	Munoz, Anthony (R) Bengals w/HOF	$ 79	Williams, Roy (R) OU/Dal	$ 89
Ham, Jack (R) Penn St., Pitt	$ 79	Nebraska 3-Sig Heisman (R)	$109	Willis, Patrick (R) Ole Miss	$79
Hampton, Dan (R) HOF Bears	$ 59	Nelson, Reggie (R) Gators	$ 69	Witten, Jason (R) U.T./Dallas	$ 79
Harper, Alvin (R) Vols/Dal	$ 59	Newman, Terence (R) Dallas	$ 59	Woodson, Charles (R) Mich/Heis	$ 79
Harris, Franco (R) Steelers/PSU	$149	Norton, Ken Jr. (R) Dallas/SF	$ 59	Wuerffel, Danny (R) Gators/Heis	$ 79
Harris, Tommie (R) OU	$ 59	Novacek, Jay (R) Dallas	$ 69	Young, Steve (R) S.F. w/HOF	$169
Hawk, A.L. (R) Ohio State/GB	$109	Nugent, Mike (R) Ohio St	$ 59	Youngblood, Jack (R) Rams HOF	$ 69
Heisman Trophy (S) 10 Sigs	$279	Oklahoma (R) 3-Sig Heisman	$159		
Henry, Travis (R) Vols w/Natl Champs	$ 69	Orton, Kyle (R) Bears/Purdue	$ 79	(R) Replica Mini (S) Auth. Mini	
Houpel, Josh (R) Oklahoma	$ 69	Otto, Jim (R) Miami/Raid HOF	$ 69	(C) Chrome (SB) Super Bowl	

FOOTBALL 8x10 & 16x20

Akman, Troy Dallas $109 or 16x20	$159	Hamburger, Chris (Skins Hog)	$15	Okoye, Christian KC Chiefs	$17
Allen, Marcus Raid/KC $59 or 16x20	$89	Harper, Alvin Vols/Dallas	$19	Orton, Kyle Bears/Purdue	$29
Barber, Tiki NYG $89 or 16x20	$149	Harris, Franco Steelers $89 or 16x20	$129	Owens, Steve '69 Heis. OU	$22
Bears Soldier Field '85 (3-Sigs)	$49	Harris, Tommie OU	$21	Packers '66 Lombeau 16x20 (14 Sigs)	$229
Bolino, Joe Navy/Heis	$22	Hawk, AJ Packers/OSU $49 16x20	$79	Parseghian, Ara Notre Dame	$19
Blount, Mel Steelers HOF	$35	Henry, Travis Titans/Vols	$25	Parrish, Roscoe Canes/Bills	$25
Blue, Greg U Georgia	$25	Holmes, Santonio Ohio St/Steelers	$29	Perkins, Don Dallas ROY	$19
Boldin, Anquan FSU	$45	Horning, Paul HOF $29 or 16x20	$59	Perry, Chris Mich/Cinn	$25
Bosworth, Brian Oklahoma	$45	Jacobs, Brandon Giants $39 16x20	$69	Perry, Wm. "Fridge" Bears	$25
Bowden, Bobby HOF $59 or 16x20	$79	Jacoby, Joe Redskins Hogs	$17	Pihos, Phil HOF 7.0 C.S.A./Eagles	$19
Brady, Kyle Jaguars/Penn St	$25	Jenkins, Michael Ohio St./Atl	$29	Plunkett, Jim Raiders $45 or 16x20	$79
Branch, Cliff Raiders	$19	Johnson, Chad Bengals	$59	Renfro, Mel (Dallas) HOF	$23
Brown, Chris Titans $19 or 16x20	$49	Johnson, Rudi Bengals	$29	Rice, Jerry SF/Raiders	$69
Brown, Ronnie Dolphins	$69	Joiner, Charlie (Chargers) HOF	$21	Richardson, Tony KC & Auburn	$19
Bruce, Issac Rams GTSM	$29	Jones, Deacon HOF Rams/SD	$25	Robertson, DeWayne Jets/KY	$21
Bullock, Keith Titans/Syr	$25	Jones, Kevin VaTech $25 Lions 16x20	$39	Rodgers, J. Nebraska Heis 80 T.S.P.	$22
Burress, Plaxico NYG $39 or 16x20	$69	Jones-Drew, Maurice Jaguars	$39	Rogers, Carlos Auburn	$29
Bush, Reggie USC/Saints $129 16x20	$169	Kelly, Leroy HOF Browns	$19	Rolle, Antrel U. Miami	$25
Campbell, Jason Aub/Skins	$35	Kilmer, Billy M.M. Skins	$19	Salaam, Rashan Col/Heis	$25

Cannon, Billy LSU/Heis	$22	Kosar, Bernie Clev/Canes	$39	Sanders, Barry Lions/OK St.	$109
Cappelletti, John Rams	$19	Kramer, Jerry OLA/PSU/GB	$25	Selmon, LeRoy OU/Bucs HOF	$23
Carson, Harry NYG	$35	Langer, Jim HOF CSA Dolphins	$21	Shockley, DJ Georgia	$25
Cassady, H. (OSU Heis) T.S.P.	$22	Lattner, Johnny N.D. Heis	$22	Simms, Chris Bucs/U. Texas	$49
Chambers, Chris Dolphins	$25	Lavelli, Dante Browns HOF	$19	Sims, Billy Lions T.S.P./OU/Heis	$22
Clark, Dwight San Fran	$25	Lefors, Stefan Louisville	$21	Smith, LJ Eagles	$25
Clayton, Michael LSU/Bucs	$25	Leinart, Matt USC $109 or 16x20	$149	Smith, Steve Panthers	$29
Couch, Eric NEL/Heis T.S.P	$29	Lelie, Ashley Den/Hi	$19	Stabler, Ken Raiders $59 or 16x20	$89
Couch, Tim T.S.P. (KY/Clev)	$25	Lilly, Bob Dallas HOF	$25	Stallworth, Donte Vols & Saints	$25
Crow, John David TX A&M Heis	$22	Little, Larry (Miami) HOF	$29	Stallworth, John Steelers HOF	$35
Davis, Glenn Army/Heis TSP	$35	Lofton, James Packers HOF	$29	Stautner, Ernie Steelers HOF	$35
Davis, Willie Packers HOF	$19	Mackey, John Colts/HOF	$19	Stenerud, Jan (K.C.)/HOF	$21
Dawson, Len T.S.P./Chiefs HOF	$35	Manning, Archie Saints	$35	Stephenson, Dwight Miami HOF	$25
Dayne, Ron Wisc w/ '99 Heis	$39	Manning, Eli NYG/MS $109 16x20	$169	Sullivan, Pat Auburn Heis	$25
Dent, R. Bears SBMVP $29 or 16x20	$59	Marchetti, Gino (Colts) HOF	$19	Taylor, Charley Skins/HOF 84 C.S.A.	$21
Dilsa, Mike Bears "Coaching"	$49	Maynard, Don T.S.P. Jets HOF	$19	Taylor, Fred Jags W.S.	$29
Donovan, Art Colts HOF	$19	McAllister, D. Saints $39 or 16x20	$45	Taylor, Jason Dolphins	$59
Dorsett, Tony Dallas/U Pitt	$49	McGinest, Willie Pats $19 or 16x20	$25	Theismann, Joe Redskins	$35
Dutton, John Cowboys C.S.A.	$15	McMichael, Randy UGA/Dolphins	$15	Thomas, Thurman (Bills/OSU)	$35
Edwards, Braylon Clev/Michigan	$59	McNown, Cade UCLA	$15	Thomas, Zack Dolphins	$59
Evans, Lee Bills/Wisc.	$25	Miller, Heath Steelers $35 or 16x20	$69	Tittle, Y.A. NY/SF HOF $29 or 16x20	$59
Faulk, Kevin Patriots	$25	Mitchell, Bobby Skins HOF	$23	Torretta, Gino U Miami Heis	$22
Favre, Brett B.F.H., Packers	$119	Montana, Joe SF/NDame	$49	Van Pelt, Brad Giants	$19
Fiutek, Doug BC/Bills/Pats/SD	$39	Moon, Warren Oilers HOF $59 16x20	$89	Vilma, Jonathan U. Miami	$25
Foote, Larry Steelers/Mich	$25	Moore, Lenny HOF '75 C.S.A.	$19	Walker, Herschel UGA $45 or 16x20	$79
Gafney, Jabbar Texans/Fla	$19	Morency, Vernand OK St./Texans	$19	Welker, Wes Dolphins/Tx Tech	$25
Galloway, Joey Bucs $29 or 16x20	$59	Moss, Sinorice U.Miami/Giants	$21	White, Chas (USC Heis) T.S.P.	$22
Gamble, Chris Ohio St	$25	Munoz, Anthony Bengals w/HOF	$35	Wilcox, Dave SF HOF	$19
Gates, Antonio Chargers $39 or 16x20	$69	Music City Miracle Titans/Dyson	$59	Williams, C. Aub/Bucs $79 or 16x20	$109
Glover, LaRoi Dallas	$15	Newsome, Ozzie Browns HOF	$25	Williams, Roy $49 Dal/OU or 16x20	$79
Gore, Frank San Fran	$35	Novacek, Jay Cowboys	$25	Winfield, Antoine Ohio St.	$23
Griese, Bob Miami HOF	$49	Nugent, Mike Ohio St.	$19	Young, Steve SF $79 16x20	$109
Haley, Charles Dallas/SF	$25	O'Neal, Deltha Bengals	$21		



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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
8	Culpepper, Daunte	QB	6'4"	265	8	UCF	T-Min-06
17	Lemon, Cleo	QB	6'2"	215	3	Arkansas State	T-SD-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
23	Brown, Ronnie	RB	6'0"	232	2	Auburn	D1-05
38	Cobbs, Patrick	RB	5'8"	210	1	North Texas	FA-06
28	Minor, Travis	RB	5'10"	203	6	Florida State	D3a-01
30	Schlesinger, Cory	FB	6'0"	247	12	Nebraska	FA-Det-07
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
86	Booker, Marty	WR	6'0"	210	8	UL Monroe	T-Chi-04
84	Chambers, Chris	WR	5'11"	210	6	Wisconsin	D2-01
82	Hagan, Derek	WR	6'2"	203	1	Arizona State	D3-06
11	Hakim, Az-Zahir	WR	5'10"	185	9	San Diego State	FA-SD-07
88	Martin, David	TE	6'4"	265	6	Tennessee	FA-GB-07
89	Massaquoi, Tim	TE	6'3"	255	1	Michigan	FA-06
87	Peelle, Justin	TE	6'4"	255	5	Oregon	FA-SD-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
79	Alabi, Anthony	T	6'5"	315	2	TCU	D5-05
72	Carey, Vernon	T	6'5"	335	3	Miami	D1-04
66	Hadnot, Rex	C/G	6'2"	325	3	Houston	D6-04
64	Jacox, Kendyl	G	6'2"	325	9	Kansas State	FA-06
76	Liwienski, Chris	G	6'5"	321	8	Indiana	FA-Ariz-07
70	Shelton, L.J.	G/T	6'6"	345	8	Eastern Michigan	FA-Cle-06
67	Toledo, Joe	T	6'5"	332	1	Washington	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
62	Evans, Frederick	DT	6'4"	305	1	Texas State	D7a-06
91	Holliday, Vonnie	DT	6'5"	288	9	North Carolina	FA-05
98	Roth, Matt	DE	6'4"	272	2	Iowa	D2-05
99	Taylor, Jason	DE	6'6"	255	10	Akron	D3a-97
94	Traylor, Keith	DT	6'2"	337	15	Central State (Okla.)	FA-05
92	Vickerson, Kevin	DT	6'5"	305	2	Michigan State	D7-05
95	Wilkinson, Dan	DT	6'4"	340	13	Ohio State	FA-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
57	Adams, Keith	LB	5'11"	240	6	Clemson	FA-06
52	Crowder, Channing	LB	6'2"	245	2	Florida	D3-05
53	Maxwell, Jim	LB	6'4"	240	3	Gardner-Webb	FA-06
55	Newman, Keith	LB	6'2"	250	8	North Carolina	FA-Min-06
56	Pope, Derrick	LB	6'0"	232	3	Alabama	D7b-04
55	Porter, Joey	LB	6'3"	250	8	Colorado State	FA-Pit-07
59	Spragan, Donnie	LB	6'3"	242	6	Stanford	FA-Den-05
54	Thomas, Zach	LB	5'11"	228	11	Texas Tech	D5c-96
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
32	Allen, Jason	CB	6'1"	213	1	Tennessee	D1-06
25	Allen, Will	CB	5'10"	196	6	Syracuse	FA-NYG-06
37	Bell, Yeremiah	S	6'0"	200	3	Eastern Kentucky	D6-03
21	Daniels, Travis	CB	6'1"	192	2	LSU	D4-05
29	Goodman, André	CB	5'10"	185	5	South Carolina	FA-Det-06
24	Hill, Renaldo	S	5'11"	190	6	Michigan State	FA-Oak-06
30	Lehan, Michael	CB	6'0"	190	4	Minnesota	FA-06
26	Tillman, Travares	S	6'1"	205	6	Georgia Tech	FA-Car-05
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Denney, John	LS	6'5"	270	2	BYU	FA-05
2	Feely, Jay	K	5'10"	210	6	Michigan	FA-NYG-07

Head Coach: Cam Cameron (first season)
Offensive Coordinator: Cam Cameron
Defensive Coordinator: Dom Capers

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	84	Chris Chambers
WR	82	Derek Hagan
LT	72	Vernon Carey
LG	**76**	**Chris Liwienski**
C	66	Rex Hadnot
RG	70	L.J. Shelton
RT	79	Anthony Alabi
TE	**88**	**David Martin**
QB	17	Cleo Lemon
FB	**30**	**Cory Schlesinger**
RB	23	Ronnie Brown

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	98	Matt Roth
DT	94	Keith Traylor
DT	91	Vonnie Holliday
DE	99	Jason Taylor
OLB	52	Channing Crowder
MLB	54	Zach Thomas
OLB	**55**	**Joey Porter**
CB	25	Will Allen
CB	29	Travis Daniels
SS	24	Renaldo Hill
FS	37	Yeremiah Bell

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	**3**	**Jay Feely**
P	**4**	**Brandon Fields**

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**9**	**John Beck**
RB		**Lorenzo Booker**
LB	59	Donnie Spragan
CB	29	André Goodman
DB	32	Jason Allen
KR	**11**	**Ted Ginn Jr.**

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Dolphins Stadium (75,540)
Surface: Grass
www.miamidolphins.com
Ticket Info: 888-346-7849
Training Camp: Nova-Southeastern University

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

K	Jay Feely (NYG)
G	Chris Liwienski (Ari)
TE	David Martin (GB)
LB	Joey Porter (Pit)
FB	Cory Schlesinger (Det)

Key Losses

DE	Kevin Carter (TB)
QB	Joey Harrington (Atl)
P	Donnie Jones (StL)
K	Olindo Mare (NO)
T	Damion McIntosh (KC)
TE	Randy McMichael (StL)
KR	Wes Welker (NE)

2007 Draft

1.	Ted Ginn Jr.	WR	6'0"	180	Ohio State
2.	John Beck	QB	6'2"	216	BYU
2.	Samson Satele	C	6'2"	311	Hawaii
3.	Lorenzo Booker	RB	5'10"	193	Florida State
4.	Paul Soliai	DT	6'4"	334	Utah
6.	Reagan Mauia	FB	6'0"	296	Hawaii
6.	Drew Mormino	C	6'3"	301	Central Michigan
7.	Kelvin Smith	ILB	6'2"	240	Syracuse
7.	Brandon Fields	P	6'4"	239	Michigan State
7.	Abraham Wright	DE	6'2"	234	Colorado

This was certainly the most significant retooling the Dolphins have done in a decade. And it was probably overdue. The cuts were deep — some, including the release of McMichael, were surprising. The Dolphins had no choice but to take second- and seventh- round picks for gritty but limited returner/receiver Welker. The Dolphins could enter 2007 with as many as seven new starters on offense, as well as two new specialists. The defense is much closer to intact after the re-signing of Vonnie Holliday. The Dolphins are hoping Porter's addition to the hybrid 3-4/4-3 defense will keep that unit at a high enough level to carry the developing offense. The keys to the future? Ginn and Beck. There are questions about both. Ginn was drafted though he was nursing a foot injury. Beck will be 26 as a rookie.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Joey Harrington*	388	223	2,236	12	15
Daunte Culpepper	134	81	929	2	3

Rushing	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Ronnie Brown	241	1,008	4.2	5
Sammy Morris*	92	400	4.3	1

Receiving	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
Wes Welker*	67	687	10.3	1
Chris Chambers	59	677	11.5	4
Marty Booker	55	747	13.6	6

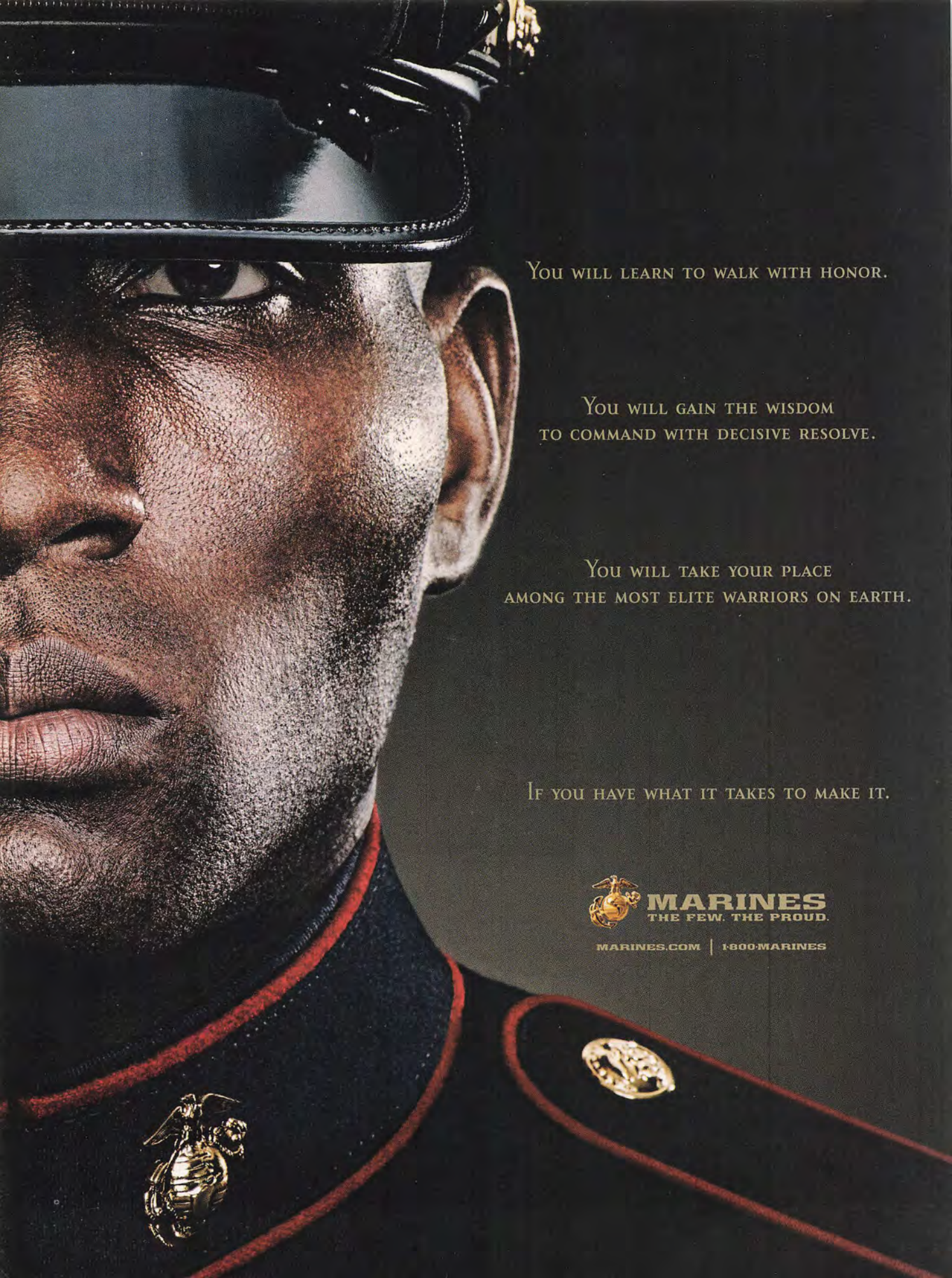
Kicking: Olindo Mare*, 26-36 FGs, 22-22 XPs, 100 points
Tackles: Zach Thomas, 165; Channing Crowder, 103
Sacks: Jason Taylor, 13.5
Interceptions: Renaldo Hill, 2; Jason Taylor, 2
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (6–10)

Sept.	7	at Pittsburgh	L	17–28
Sept.	17	Buffalo	L	6–16
Sept.	24	Tennessee	W	13–10
Oct.	1	at Houston	L	15–17
Oct.	8	at New England	L	10–20
Oct.	15	at N.Y. Jets	L	17–20
Oct.	22	Green Bay	L	24–34
Nov.	5	at Chicago	W	31–13
Nov.	12	Kansas City	W	13–10
Nov.	19	Minnesota	W	24–20
Nov.	23	at Detroit	W	27–10
Dec.	3	Jacksonville	L	10–24
Dec.	10	New England	W	21– 0
Dec.	17	at Buffalo	L	0–21
Dec.	25	N.Y. Jets	L	10–13
Dec.	31	at Indianapolis	L	22–27

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	310.0	20	-12.1
Rushing	104.6	22	-12.7
Passing	205.4	13	+0.6
Scoring	16.2	29	-4.5
Punt Returns	9.2	11	+0.5
Kick Returns	21.2	27	-1.3
Red Zone TD %	43.5	24	-7.3
Defense			
Total Defense	289.1	4	-33.0
Against Rush	101.1	8	-16.2
Against Pass	187.9	5	-16.9
Points Allowed	17.7	5	-3.0
Interceptions	8	31	-8.3
Sacks	47	3	+10.7
Turnover Diff.	+2	13T	-


You will learn to walk with honor.
You will gain the wisdom
to command with decisive resolve.
You will take your place
among the most elite warriors on earth.
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PATRIOTS

Falling just one minute shy of the Super Bowl last season may turn out to be the best thing that could have happened to the 2007 Patriots. We'll never know if Bill Belichick and Scott Pioli would have otherwise undertaken the extreme makeover that marked this offseason, but they're clearly on a mission after last season's heartbreaking AFC title game loss to the Colts.

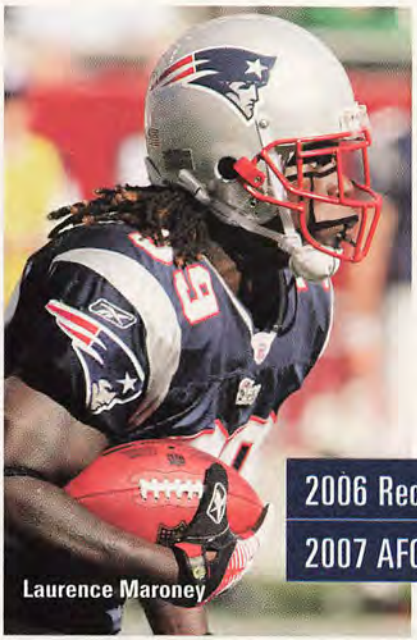
Typically wallflowers during free agency, the Pats signed prized linebacker Adalius Thomas, swung a trade for Wes Welker, nabbed fellow wideout Donte' Stallworth, and then came the stunning coup de grace — a draft-day deal with the Raiders to acquire all-world wide receiver Randy Moss.

When the dust settled, the Pats were prohibitive Super Bowl favorites. Some argued the spending spree had cost them their soul, but that will be a small price to pay if they're able to polish a fourth Lombardi Trophy.

Quarterbacks As far as building blocks go, they don't get much better than No. 12. Tom Brady is a workaholic and classic lead-by-example type, whether it's annually winning the team's offseason workout award or understanding every last detail of the opposing defense's coverages. Most of what the Patriots do offensively revolves around Brady's ability to spread the field, find the open man, and hit him in stride. Backup Matt Cassel threw almost as many passes in his first game for the Patriots (20) as in his entire career at USC (33). The Patriots hope he never sees the field.

Running Backs If the Patriots harbored any second thoughts about parting with Corey Dillon, Laurence Maroney sealed the deal. As a rookie out of Minnesota, the explosive back proved worthy of his first-round pick, averaging 4.3 yards per carry. The question going forward is how he'll handle being the lead runner. He has shared carries since college, and this will be his first crack at shouldering the load. He also battled a couple of minor injuries last year. Veteran Sammy Morris replaces Dillon. The former Dolphin is solid in just about every area, but a standout in none. He runs hard between the tackles, however, and has decent hands. One of the key players is scatback Kevin Faulk, a safety valve on third down with great hands and shiftiness, particularly on screens. Team-first fullback Heath Evans will have a home as long as he continues opening holes and excelling on special teams.

Receivers Brady must wake up every morning thinking he's in heaven. Following a season that saw him breaking in mediocre receivers until the playoffs, he's now blessed with perhaps the top stable of wideouts in the league. Moss, Stallworth and Welker should make for a revamped passing attack. Moss probably stands as the most talented receiver in team history. He has averaged 75 catches, 1,189 yards and 11 TDs per season over his nine-year career. With Moss and Stallworth requiring safety help on the outside, the Pats should see fewer safeties crowding the line, opening both the running game and intermediate routes for Welker underneath. Tight end Ben Watson should benefit as much as Welker, provided he learns to run quick timing patterns underneath to take advantage of single-linebacker coverage. The final wide receiver spots should be a battle, with veteran Troy Brown and free agent Kelley Washington battling it out with Reche Caldwell and Jabar Gaffney.


Laurence Maroney

Offensive Linemen The Patriots in many ways are built from the trenches, where all five starting linemen are signed through at least 2009, as well as the top two backups. The strength of the line is the middle, where guards Logan Mankins and Stephen Neal flank center Dan Koppen. All three are potential All-Pros and perfect models of what the Pats seek up front — big, but not too big, intelligent, and quick. If there's a

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE PATRIOTS

The Patriots have ridden the less-is-more approach to three Super Bowls in the last six years. This season they'll give more-is-more a whirl. After years of building a strong middle class, the Pats attacked the high-rent district. Their dizzying additions — Randy Moss, Adalius Thomas, and Wes Welker, to name three — make the P-Men Super Bowl favorites. They want to make sure there's no repeat of last year, when they advanced to the AFC title game only to fall one minute shy of their fourth title game since 2001. The free agent bacchanal led some to wonder if coach Bill Belichick is gearing up for a final run in New England before seeking a new challenge elsewhere. Had he not traded two of his top three draft picks for first- and third-rounders in next year's draft, that theory would hold more water. Regardless, the Pats are built as if there's no tomorrow. While they may have some holes on defense beyond a powerhouse front three, their offense may break the franchise record of 441 points set in 1980. It won't be easy, thanks to a brutal schedule that includes eight games against playoff teams. But Tom Brady and Co. have been built to weather whatever challenges come their way, and if the season ends anywhere other than Arizona, surrounded by anything other than confetti, it will be a disappointment.

2006 Record: 12–4

2007 AFC East Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	San Diego	8:15 pm
Sept.	23	Buffalo	1:00 pm
Oct.	1	at Cincinnati	8:30 pm
Oct.	7	Cleveland	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Dallas	4:15 pm
Oct.	21	at Miami	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	Washington	4:15 pm
Nov.	4	at Indianapolis	4:15 pm
Week	10	BYE	
Nov.	18	at Buffalo	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	Philadelphia	8:15 pm
Dec.	3	at Baltimore	8:30 pm
Dec.	9	Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	Miami	1:00 pm
Dec.	29	at N.Y. Giants	8:15 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Maroney: Bruce Schwartzman
Brady: Stan Liu/US Presswire

Patriots QB

Tom Brady

Richard Seymour

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Fresh Moss Be afraid, rest of the NFL, be very afraid. Here's what Randy Moss had to say about coming to New England: "Let's put it this way — the Moss of old is back!"

Impact receivers Only 48 percent of the team's completions went to wideouts last year. That number should once again top 60 percent, as it did in 2005.

There's a 6 a.m. now? Here's a peak inside the Patriots way. When newcomers show up bleary eyed for 6 a.m. workouts, veterans like Rodney Harrison greet them with a dismissive, "Good afternoon."

Put it on the board How clutch is Tom Brady? The Patriots have won eight straight overtime games dating back to 2000, the longest streak in NFL history. The first two of those victories came with Drew Bledsoe at QB.

Love those winter months The Patriots turn it on at the right time of year. Since the start of their Super Bowl era in 2001, they're 40–8 in games played on or after Thanksgiving. The .833 winning percentage is by far the best in the league.

Fantasy sleeper Linebacker Mike Vrabel is batting 1.000 on offense as a receiver — he has six goal-line receptions, and all six have gone for touchdowns.

question it's at the tackle spots, where veteran Matt Light and third-year man Nick Kaczur occasionally struggled to slow opposing speed rushers. This will be an area to watch if the Pats go to more five- and seven-step drops while giving Moss and Stallworth time to get downfield. Top backups Russ Hochstein and Ryan O'Callaghan provide depth across the line, with the latter potentially displacing Kaczur as the starter at right tackle.

Defensive Linemen The 3-4 may not yield much in the way of stats, but that in no way minimizes the impact of this trio. Former first-round draft picks Richard Seymour, Vince Wilfork and Ty Warren serve as the heart and soul of the defense. Capable of taking over a game by themselves, they two-gap against the run and fire upfield when single blocked. Seymour commands double- and triple-teams on every play, whether he's outside in the 3-4 or inside in the 4-3. Nearing his level is Warren, a matchup nightmare for opposing right tackles. That leaves Wilfork, one of the most naturally gifted noses in the league and unselfish enough to act as a glorified offensive lineman while the linebackers make tackles. If the Pats switch to a 4-3, pass rushing specialist Jarvis Green or interior specialist Mike Wright gets the call.

Linebackers All four starting linebackers will be 30 years old by the season-opener, including free agent splash Adalius Thomas. It's fair to ask if Tedy Bruschi can stay healthy, how Mike Vrabel will react to playing inside again and if Rosevelt Colvin will ever achieve the dominance that accompanied his game prior to a devastating 2003 hip injury. A healthy Bruschi gives the Pats a playmaker in the middle with instantaneous recognition skills. Vrabel's equally cerebral, while Colvin brings it from the edge and Thomas does a little bit of everything. "Sign Adalius to play just one spot and you might think you didn't get your money's worth," says Ravens coach Brian Billick. "New England is a perfect fit for him." The Patriots are thin at backup, with special teams standout Eric Alexander the first guy off the bench.

Defensive Backs The fate of this group hinges on Asante Samuel. If the league's reigning interception champ (10) returns, the group should be solid. If he holds out rather than accept the franchise tag, the Pats will have to scramble. Assuming Samuel returns, he'll be joined by third-year corner Ellis Hobbs, a scrappy starter who played virtually all of last season with a broken wrist. Hobbs plays beyond his height and has the potential to be a No. 1 corner. The safety spot is in flux, with veteran Rodney Harrison nearing the end and returning starter Eugene Wilson coming off an injury-marred season. Rookie first-round pick Brandon Meriweather out of Miami should help by bringing the unit some much-needed speed and coverage skills. Depth is a little sketchy thereafter, with Chad Scott turning 33 in September and former starter Randall Gay coming off two straight seasons that ended on IR. Former Bengals standout Tory James is 34 and has lost a step, while veteran Artrell Hawkins and third-year man James Sanders are in the mix as well.

FANTASY ATHLON SPORTS

Laurence Maroney, RB
An increase in opportunities following Corey Dillon's release propels Maroney to a first round pick.

Randy Moss, WR
Has the opportunity to revive his fantasy career with a QB like Tom Brady.

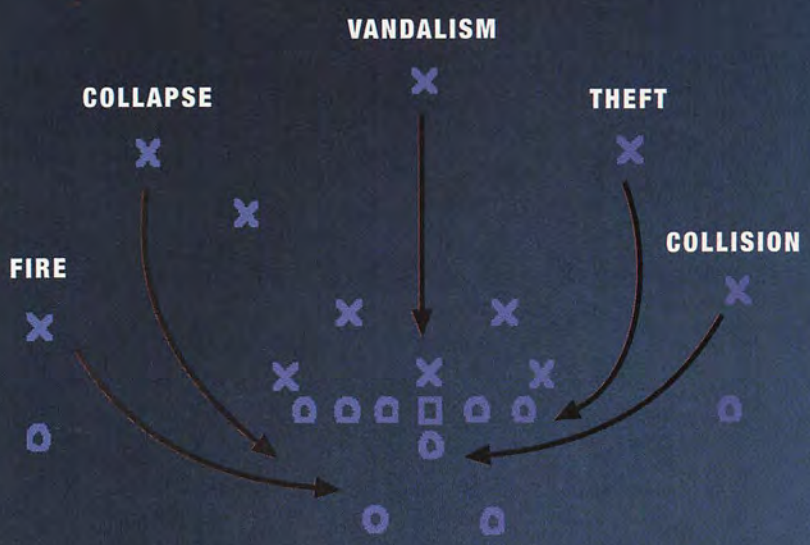
WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Special Teams Belichick's already considered a defensive genius, but his work in the kicking game last year proved masterful, too. He and special teams coach Brad Seely limited Stephen Gostkowski's opportunities to fail, and the rookie responded by becoming automatic in the playoffs. The pressure to replace Adam Vinatieri could have been overwhelming, but Gostkowski and his huge leg overcame it. The return games are also covered, with Maroney and Hobbs explosive on kickoffs and Welker an upgrade over Faulk on punts. Veteran Josh Miller should once again be the punter, with his hang time and directional abilities key.

Coaching Staff For the first time since 2004, the Pats won't be breaking in any new coordinators. On the offensive side, young Josh McDaniels could soon find himself riding the Eric Mangini 30-something shuttle to a head job. McDaniels made great strides in 2006, showing no fear of spreading the field and opening the passing game. On the defensive side, career college coach Dean Pees was impressive enough to have some in the organization viewing him as Belichick's heir apparent, should the head man decide to leave. A Nick Saban disciple, Pees knows the ins and outs of Belichick's 3-4 scheme as well as anyone.

Seymore: Bruce Schwartzman; Moss: Peter Brouillet

Are you prepared for the Blitz?



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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
12	Brady, Tom	QB	6'4"	225	7	Michigan	D6b-00
16	Cassel, Matt	QB	6'4"	225	2	USC	D7a-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
44	Evans, Heath	RB	6'0"	250	6	Auburn	FA-05
33	Faulk, Kevin	RB	5'8"	202	8	LSU	D2-99
39	Maroney, Laurence	RB	5'11"	220	1	Minnesota	D1-06
31	Morris, Sammy	RB	6'0"	218	7	Texas Tech	FA-Mia-07
35	Pass, Patrick	RB	5'10"	217	7	Georgia	D7b-00
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
88	Brady, Kyle	TE	6'6"	280	12	Penn State	FA-Jac-07
80	Brown, Troy	WR	5'10"	196	14	Marshall	D8-93
87	Caldwell, Reche	WR	6'0"	210	5	Florida	FA-SD-06
10	Gaffney, Jabar	WR	6'1"	205	5	Florida	FA-06
17	Jackson, Chad	WR	6'1"	215	1	Florida	D2-06
85	Kranchick, Matt	TE	6'7"	260	2	Penn State	FA-06
	Moss, Randy	WR	6'4"	210	9	Marshall	T-Oak-07
18	Stallworth, Donte'	WR	6'0"	196	5	Tennessee	FA-Phi-07
86	Thomas, David	TE	6'3"	248	1	Texas	D3-06
87	Washington, Kelley	WR	6'3"	218	4	Tennessee	FA-Cin-07
84	Watson, Benjamin	TE	6'3"	255	3	Georgia	D1b-04
83	Welker, Wes	WR	5'9"	185	3	Texas Tech	T-Mia-07
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
62	Barthelmes, Brian	C	6'6"	300	1	Virginia	FA-06
65	Britt, Wesley	T	6'8"	320	1	Alabama	FA-06
71	Hochstein, Russ	G/C	6'4"	305	6	Nebraska	FA-03
77	Kaczur, Nick	T	6'4"	315	2	Toledo	D3b-05
67	Koppen, Dan	C	6'2"	296	4	Boston College	D5-03
72	Light, Matt	T	6'4"	305	6	Purdue	D2-01
70	Mankins, Logan	G	6'4"	310	2	Fresno State	D1-05
64	Mruczkowski, Gene	G/C	6'2"	305	4	Purdue	FA-03
61	Neal, Stephen	G	6'4"	305	5	Cal State-Bakersfield	FA-01
68	O'Callaghan, Ryan	T	6'7"	330	1	California	D5-06
74	Yates, Billy	G	6'2"	305	3	Texas A&M	FA-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Green, Jarvis	DL	6'3"	285	5	LSU	D4b-02
91	Hill, Marquise	DL	6'6"	300	3	LSU	D2-04
93	Seymour, Richard	DL	6'6"	310	6	Georgia	D1-01
90	Smith, Le Kevin	DL	6'1"	308	1	Nebraska	D6c-06
92	Thomas, Santonio	DL	6'4"	305	1	Miami	FA-05
94	Warren, Ty	DL	6'5"	300	4	Texas A&M	D1-03
75	Wilfork, Vince	DL	6'2"	325	3	Miami	D1a-04
99	Wright, Mike	DL	6'4"	295	2	Cincinnati	FA-05
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
52	Alexander, Eric	LB	6'2"	240	2	LSU	FA-04
54	Bruschi, Tedy	LB	6'1"	247	11	Arizona	D3-96
59	Colvin, Rosevelt	LB	6'3"	250	8	Purdue	FA-Chi-03
47	Gardner, Barry	LB	6'1"	245	8	Northwestern	FA-06
53	Izzo, Larry	LB	5'10"	228	11	Rice	FA-Mia-01
46	Mays, Corey	LB	6'1"	245	1	Notre Dame	FA-06
96	Thomas, Adalius	LB	6'2"	270	7	Southern Miss	FA-Bal-07
50	Vrabel, Mike	LB	6'4"	261	10	Ohio State	FA-Pit-01
58	Woods, Pierre	LB	6'5"	250	1	Michigan	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
23	Andrews, Willie	CB	5'10"	195	1	Baylor	D7-06
32	Baker, Rashad	S	5'10"	198	3	Tennessee	W-Min-06
21	Gay, Randall	CB	5'11"	190	3	LSU	FA-04
37	Harrison, Rodney	S	6'1"	220	13	Western Illinois	FA-SD-03
25	Hawkins, Artrell	DB	5'10"	195	9	Cincinnati	FA-Was-05
27	Hobbs, Ellis	CB	5'9"	190	2	Iowa State	D3a-05
20	Jackson, Eddie	CB	6'0"	200	3	Arkansas	FA-Mia-07
28	James, Tory	CB	6'2"	192	11	LSU	FA-Cin-07
24	Mitchell, Mel	S	6'1"	225	5	Western Kentucky	FA-NO-06
22	Samuel, Asante	CB	5'10"	185	4	UCF	D4b-03
36	Sanders, James	S	5'10"	210	2	Fresno State	D4-05
30	Scott, Chad	DB	6'1"	205	10	Maryland	FA-Pit-05
31	Spann, Antwain	CB	6'0"	190	1	UL Lafayette	FA-06
26	Wilson, Eugene	DB	5'10"	195	4	Illinois	D2a-03
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
3	Gostkowski, Stephen	K	6'1"	210	1	Memphis	D4b-06
8	Miller, Josh	P	6'4"	225	11	Arizona	FA-PIT-04
66	Paxton, Lonie	LS	6'2"	260	7	Sacramento State	FA-00

Head Coach: Bill Belichick (111–81, 13–3 Playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Josh McDaniels
Defensive Coordinator: Dean Pees

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR		**Randy Moss**
WR	**18**	**Donte' Stallworth**
WR	**83**	**Wes Welker**
LT	72	Matt Light
LG	70	Logan Mankins
C	67	Dan Koppen
RG	61	Stephen Neal
RT	68	Ryan O'Callaghan
TE	84	Ben Watson
QB	12	Tom Brady
RB	39	Laurence Maroney

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	94	Ty Warren
NT	75	Vince Wilfork
DE	93	Richard Seymour
OLB	**96**	**Adalius Thomas**
ILB	50	Mike Vrabel
ILB	54	Tedy Bruschi
OLB	59	Rosevelt Colvin
CB	22	Asante Samuel
CB	27	Ellis Hobbs
SS	37	Rodney Harrison
FS	26	Eugene Wilson

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	3	Stephen Gostkowski
P	8	Josh Miller

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	16	Matt Cassel
RB	33	Kevin Faulk
TE	86	David Thomas
DE	97	Jarvis Green
S		**Brandon Meriweather**

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Gillette Stadium (68,756)
Surface: Field Turf
www.patriots.com
Ticket Info: 800-543-1776
Training Camp: Gillette Stadium

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

TE	Kyle Brady (Jac)
CB	Tory James (Cin)
RB	Sammy Morris (Mia)
WR	Randy Moss (Oak)
WR	Donte' Stallworth (Phi)
LB	Adalius Thomas (Bal)
WR	Kelley Washington (Cin)
WR	Wes Welker (Mia)

Key Losses

LB	Tully Banta-Cain (SF)
LB	Don Davis (Retired)
RB	Corey Dillon (FA)
TE	Daniel Graham (Den)
P	Todd Sauerbrun (Den)
LB	Junior Seau (FA)
QB	Vinny Testaverde (Retired)

2007 Draft

1.	Brandon Meriweather	FS	5'11"	192	Miami
4.	Kareem Brown	DT	6'4"	290	Miami
5.	Clint Oldenburg	T	6'6"	300	Colorado State
6.	Justin Rogers	OLB	6'3"	262	SMU
6.	Mike Richardson	CB	5'11"	188	Notre Dame
6.	Justise Hairston	RB	6'2"	220	Central Conn. State
6.	Corey Hilliard	T	6'5"	318	Oklahoma State
7.	Oscar Lua	ILB	6'1"	245	USC
7.	Mike Elgin	G	6'3"	291	Iowa

Where to start? The Patriots took one of the worst wide receiving corps in the league and transformed it quite possibly into the best. Moss, Welker and Stallworth alone could combine for 200 catches. Add key role players like Morris, Brady and Washington, and the Pats have revamped almost every skill position on offense. On defense, Thomas should be able to step right in and continue their recent run of outstanding linebacker play. The Pats don't project to get a ton of help from the draft beyond Meriweather and possibly Brown.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Tom Brady	516	319	3,529	24	12
Rushing	**Att.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Corey Dillon*	199		812	4.1	13
Laurence Maroney	175		745	4.3	6
Receiving	**Rec.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Reche Caldwell	61		760	12.5	4
Ben Watson	49		643	13.1	3
Troy Brown	43		384	8.9	4
Kevin Faulk	43		356	8.3	2

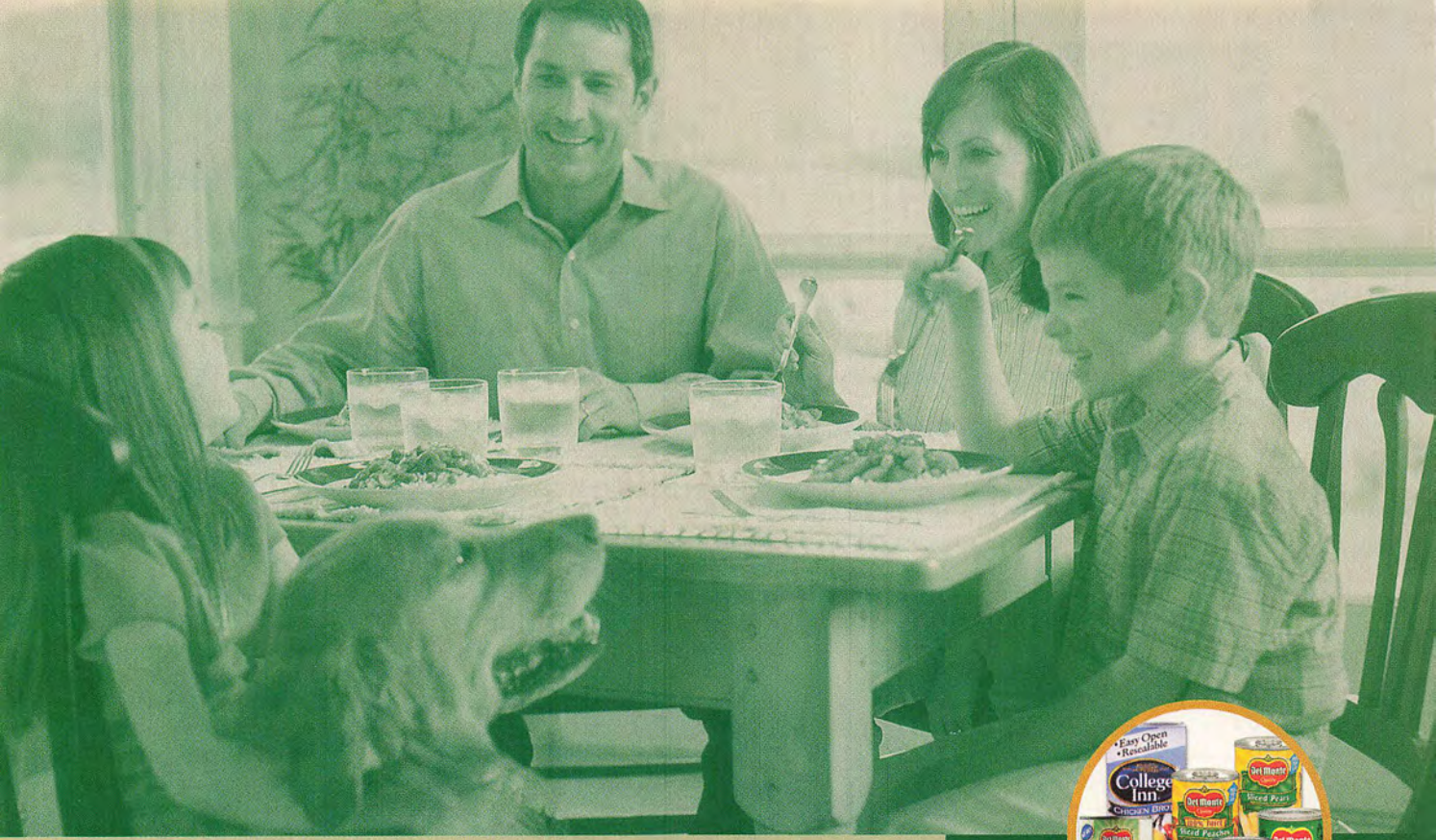
Kicking: Stephen Gostkowski, 20-26 FGs, 43-44 XPs, 103 pts.
Tackles: Tedy Bruschi, 112; Mike Vrabel, 89
Sacks: Rosevelt Colvin, 8.5
Interceptions: Asante Samuel, 10
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (12–4)

Sept.	10	Buffalo	W	19–17
Sept.	17	at N.Y. Jets	W	24–17
Sept.	24	Denver	L	7–17
Oct.	1	at Cincinnati	W	38–13
Oct.	8	Miami	W	20–10
Oct.	22	at Buffalo	W	28– 6
Oct.	30	at Minnesota	W	31– 7
Nov.	5	Indianapolis	L	20–27
Nov.	12	N.Y. Jets	L	14–17
Nov.	19	at Green Bay	W	35– 0
Nov.	26	Chicago	W	17–13
Dec.	3	Detroit	W	28–21
Dec.	10	at Miami	L	0–21
Dec.	17	Houston	W	40– 7
Dec.	24	at Jacksonville	W	24–21
Dec.	31	at Tennessee	W	40–23
		Postseason		
Jan.	7	N.Y. Jets	W	37–16
Jan.	14	at San Diego	W	24–21
Jan.	21	at Indianapolis	L	34–38

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	335.6	11	+13.5
Rushing	123.1	12	+5.8
Passing	212.5	12	+7.7
Scoring	24.1	7	+3.4
Punt Returns	11.7	3	+3.0
Kick Returns	26.8	1	+4.3
Red Zone TD %	60.0	5	+9.2
Defense			
Total Defense	294.4	6	-27.7
Against Rush	94.2	5	-23.1
Against Pass	200.2	12	-4.6
Points Allowed	14.8	2	-5.9
Interceptions	22	4	+5.7
Sacks	44	5	+7.7
Turnover Diff.	+8	4T	



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JETS

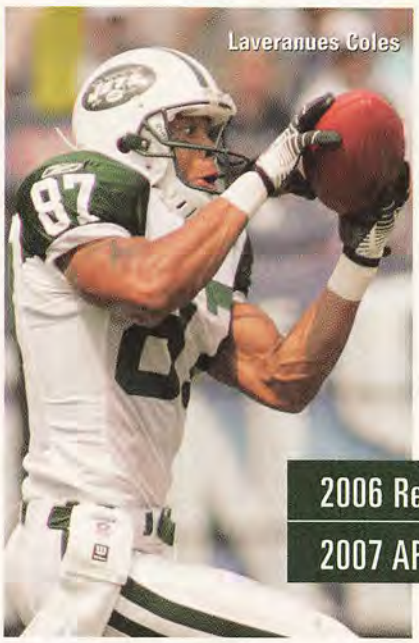
Eric Mangini took the league by storm in his debut season, earning the heady nickname "Man-genius for his creative gameplanning and for coaxing 10 wins out of a team from which little was expected. But what about the encore?

The Jets lost only one starter (fullback B.J. Askew) to free agency. However, the other teams in the league have had an entire offseason to look at the Jets on tape and try to get a handle on their constantly changing offensive and defensive gameplans.

No, the element of surprise won't be there, not after the Jets went into Mangini's first season as head coach and defied those low expectations. A successful follow-up won't be easy, although at least the offense now has a big-time featured back in Thomas Jones to take some of the pressure off Chad Pennington. And the defense should be more consistent now that the players are experienced in the 3-4, although the Jets still have some defenders who were better fits in their old 4-3 Tampa scheme.

Quarterbacks Pennington had two surgeries on his throwing shoulder 10 months apart in 2005 and entered 2006 in a four-way fight for the starting job. Yet he beat the odds by starting all 16 games for the first time in his career en route to winning Comeback Player of the Year. The new system installed by first-year offensive coordinator Brian Schottenheimer fit Pennington perfectly, as it took full advantage of his ability to read defenses both before and after the snap. The passing offense again will be based around his ability to make the right reads. Mangini already has anointed Pennington as the starter entering 2007, and now Pennington must cut down on his turnovers. He had 16 interceptions last season to go with 17 touchdown passes. He also needs to stay upright and healthy again, as neither backup appears ready for prime time. Kellen Clemens, a second-round pick last year, has promise but still is learning, while veteran Marques Tuiasosopo, a free-agent pickup from Oakland, has two touchdown passes and seven interceptions in his six-year career.

Running Backs The Jets had a running back-by-committee season after Curtis Martin was forced to hang it up because of a knee injury. That's not the plan this season, now that they've acquired Jones from Chicago. Jones, who will be 29 in August, still has plenty of tread left as he didn't become a workhorse until 2004. Jones, who accelerates well, is especially effective running between the tackles and should help the Jets in short-yardage situations, which have been a chronic problem. Cedric Houston also could get some work there. The Jets don't see the 5'8" Leon Washington as an every-down back, but the fourth-round pick led the team with 650 yards last season and proved to be excellent in space. Pencil him in again as a third down back and as a change-of-pace ball-carrier. He also could return punts. The team hopes that former Miami fullback Darian Barnes will be a more consistent blocker than Askew was.


Laveranues Coles

Receivers Jerricho Cotchery had 25 receptions and no touchdowns in his first two years as a Jet, but he broke out with 82 catches and six TDs last season. He should be able to maintain that production. Although he is not a defense-stretcher, Cotchery has a knack for making the big play and can catch the ball in traffic. Making the tough reception over the middle has been a staple of Laveranues Coles' game, and while Mangini may not like the veteran wideout's outspoken personality, he can't find fault with Coles' work ethic and toughness. What's missing from this unit is a Santana Moss-type who can flat-out blow by defenders with his speed and open things up for others. Also missing is a big-time receiving tight end, although Chris Baker did have a career-high 31 catches in his fifth season and could have had more had he not been called

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE JETS

Eric Mangini quickly shed the "too-young" label and soon was recognized as one of the top coaches in the game. The challenge in his second year will be to build upon a surprising 10–6 record and wild card berth. It will help that, for the first time since 2004, quarterback Chad Pennington didn't spend most of his offseason rehabbing from a shoulder injury, and thus was able to concentrate on picking up even more nuances of second-year coordinator Brian Schottenheimer's system. New running back Thomas Jones, acquired from the Bears, also will take some heat off Pennington. The defense still seems to have more pieces suited to the 4-3 than the 3-4 but has playmakers in outside linebacker Bryan Thomas and safety Kerry Rhodes. That unit also should get some help from first- and second-round draft picks Darrelle Revis and David Harris. The Jets have nine games in their own stadium this season (they play the Giants on the "road"), yet they will finish with four away games in their last six, including four in a span of five games. A return to the postseason is a realistic goal, even though AFC East rival New England had a hectic and productive offseason. A fast start is a must for New York, and it won't be easy, with games against New England and Baltimore the first two weeks.

2006 Record: 10–6

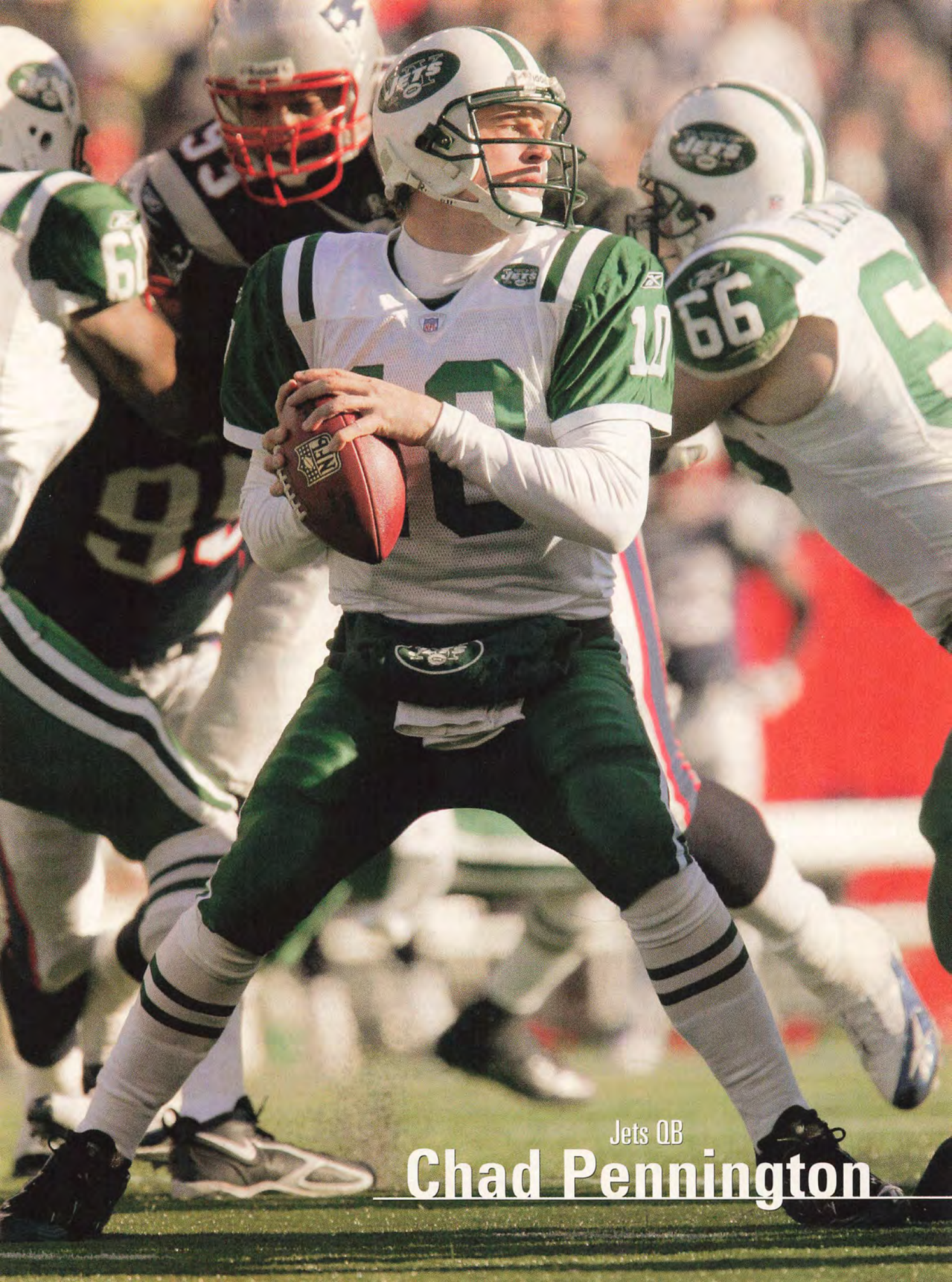
2007 AFC East Prediction: 2nd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	New England	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	at Baltimore	4:15 pm
Sept.	23	Miami	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at Buffalo	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	at N.Y. Giants	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	Philadelphia	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Cincinnati	4:05 pm
Oct.	28	Buffalo	4:05 pm
Nov.	4	Washington	1:00 pm
Week	10	BYE	
Nov.	18	Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Nov.	22	at Dallas	4:15 pm
Dec.	2	at Miami	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	Cleveland	4:15 pm
Dec.	16	at New England	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at Tennessee	4:15 pm
Dec.	30	Kansas City	8:15 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Coles: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports
Pennington: David Butler/ US Presswire



Jets QB

Chad Pennington

Jonathan Vilma

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Committee disbanded In 2006, four Jets' running backs — Kevan Barlow, Derrick Blaylock, Cedric Houston and Leon Washington — each carried the ball at least 18 times in a game. But with the acquisition of Thomas Jones, the Jets have a legitimate featured back who should get at least 20 carries per game, although Washington's speed and elusiveness will keep him in the mix.

Standing tall Chad Pennington started and played all 16 regular-season games for the first time in his career. That means he enters the 2007 campaign after a normal offseason in which he concentrated on fine-tuning his understanding of the offense, as opposed to rehabbing his right shoulder.

Done with mirrors The Jets finished 20th in total defense in 2006 but were sixth in points allowed. They knew they needed help on that side of the ball, which is why their first two draft picks went toward the defense.

Finishing kick The Jets won five of their last six games in 2006, including their last three. That was after enduring the team's most intense training camp since 2000. Mangini has vowed not to ease up on the pedal this summer. The Jets again will need resiliency, as four of their last six games are on the road.

upon to help out in pass protection so often. Improvement by the O-line should result in more receptions for Baker.

Offensive Linemen The Jets appear set for a long time at center and left tackle with 2006 first-round picks Nick Mangold and D'Brickashaw Ferguson, respectively. Mangold made a seamless transition from college both physically and mentally as he quickly became adept at making the line calls. Ferguson showed flashes of his potential but struggled a bit toward the end of the season. He needs to put on weight. Left guard Pete Kendall still is a stalwart but will be 34 by opening day. Right guard Brandon Moore again was solid, and newcomer Anthony Clement was steady at right tackle and thus was re-signed. The line was adequate in pass protection but needs to do a better job with the running game.

Defensive Linemen Dewayne Robertson played much better in the second half of the 2006 season, and the Jets appear to be pleased with his playmaking ability. But he doesn't have the size to occupy more than one blocker at a time and would be more effective as a two-gapping tackle in a 4-3. Perhaps Sione Pouha, who was sidelined all of last season, can work his way into the rotation at nose tackle this season. Pouha certainly has the size for it. Shaun Ellis' numbers have gone down in recent years, and the Jets need to find a pass-rushing 3-4 end or outside linebacker for the future. The Jets believe Kenyon Coleman, formerly of Dallas, can be the answer at right end. Miami import David Bowens is purely a third down pass-rushing specialist.

Linebackers Bryan Thomas moved from end to a standup outside linebacker last season and finally showed why the Jets drafted him in the first round in 2002. Nobody benefited more from the switch to the 3-4 than Thomas, who racked up a career-high 8.5 sacks. Inside backer Jonathan Vilma, however, wasn't as productive as he found himself having to take on too many blockers without a prototypical nose tackle in front of him. Trade rumors about him abounded during the offseason, but the Jets are in no hurry to make a move. Victor Hobson, the other outside linebacker, recorded a career-high six sacks. Eric Barton, the other inside man, was better in the 4-3 and will be challenged by second-round pick David Harris, a tough tackler who fits the mold of a 3-4 inside backer. The Jets might not have had to pick Harris in the second round (and surrender one of their draft choices in the process) had last year's third-rounder, Anthony Schlegel, not been such a disappointment.

Defensive Backs The Jets hope that first-round pick Darrelle Revis can step in right away and display the ability to be a lockdown corner. Veteran Andre Dyson was solid on the left side last season and should be even better now that he won't be paired with a different corner every other week. At safety, Kerry Rhodes was a revelation in 2006 as a big-play specialist and should only get better. Erik Coleman bounced back from a subpar 2005 but could be challenged by Eric Smith, a 2006 third-round selection who picked off two passes last season. Rashad Washington also was good in nickel and dime packages.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Thomas Jones, RB
Terrific opportunity for the veteran Jones to take over as the Jets' workhorse back. Will get plenty of carries.
Jerricho Cotchery, WR
Had 10 games last season with at least fvie receptions, but Cotchery won't be an unknown on draft day again.

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Specialists Kicker Mike Nugent made 26 of his last 27 field-goal attempts in 2006, counting playoffs, after an opening-day nightmare at Tennessee (1-for-3 field goal, 2-for-3 PAT) seemed to put his job in jeopardy. He can make clutch kicks, but his lack of leg strength on kickoffs has been a continuing issue (only two touchbacks in 2006). Ben Graham had 26 punts inside the 20-yard line, but his net numbers dropped off near the end of the season for the second straight year as he coped with the December winds of the Meadowlands. Justin Miller led the NFL in kickoff-return average and made the Pro Bowl. Washington returned punts late in the season, but Revis could fill that role.

Coaching Staff The Jets gave Schottenheimer a hefty raise after he withdrew his name for consideration as the Dolphins' head coach. In his first year as a coordinator, he installed an innovative offense perfectly suited to Pennington's strengths. Now the challenge will be to stay ahead of the competition. Mangini takes a hands-on approach with the defense and works well with coordinator Bob Sutton. Staff tweaks include the addition of former New England receivers coach Brian Daboll as the quarterbacks coach and Mike MacIntyre as the defensive backs coach after Corwin Brown departed to become Notre Dame's defensive coordinator.

Vilma: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports; Cotchery: Bruce Schwartzman

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2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
6	Clemens, Kellen	QB	6'2"	223	1	Oregon	D2-06
10	Pennington, Chad	QB	6'3"	225	7	Marshall	D1c-00
8	Tuiasosopo, Marques	QB	6'1"	220	6	Washington	FA-Oak-07
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
37	Barnes, Darian	FB	6'2"	240	5	Hampton	FA-Mia-07
34	Houston, Cedric	RB	6'0"	220	2	Tennessee	D6a-05
20	Jones, Thomas	RB	5'10"	215	7	Virginia	T-Chi-07
45	Tutt, Stacy	FB	6'1"	233	1	Richmond	FA-06
29	Washington, Leon	RB	5'8"	202	1	Florida State	D4b-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
86	Baker, Chris	TE	6'3"	258	5	Michigan State	D3-02
87	Coles, Laveranues	WR	5'11"	193	7	Florida State	T-Was-05
89	Cotchery, Jerricho	WR	6'0"	207	3	NC State	D4a-04
17	Dwight, Tim	WR	5'8"	180	9	Iowa	FA-NE-06
40	Kowalewski, Joe	TE	6'4"	250	1	Syracuse	FA-06
81	McCareins, Justin	WR	6'2"	215	6	Northern Illinois	T-Ten-04
82	Pociask, Jason	TE	6'2"	259	1	Wisconsin	D5-06
88	Ryan, Sean	TE	6'5"	265	3	Boston College	T-Dal-06
16	Smith, Brad	WR	6'2"	210	1	Missouri	D4a-06
15	Wright, Wallace	WR	6'0"	191	1	North Carolina	FA-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
78	Blanton, Ed	T	6'9"	330	1	UCLA	FA-06
68	Clement, Anthony	T	6'8"	320	9	UL Lafayette	FA-SF-06
60	Ferguson, D'Brickashaw	T	6'6"	312	1	Virginia	D1a-06
76	Goddard, Na'Shan	T	6'5"	315	1	South Carolina	FA-06
79	Jones, Adrian	T	6'5"	296	3	Kansas	D4b-04
66	Kendall, Pete	G	6'5"	292	11	Boston College	FA-04
74	Mangold, Nick	C	6'4"	300	1	Ohio State	D1b-06
65	Moore, Brandon	G	6'3"	295	4	Illinois	FA-03
71	Smith, Wade	T	6'4"	318	4	Memphis	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Adams, Darrell	DE/LB	6'5"	282	1	Villanova	FA-06
96	Bowens, David	DE	6'3"	265	7	Western Illinois	FA-Mia-07
93	Coleman, Kenyon	DE	6'5"	295	4	UCLA	FA-Dal-07
92	Ellis, Shaun	DE	6'5"	285	7	Tennessee	D1a-00
98	Hamilton, Bobby	DE	6'5"	285	12	Southern Miss	T-Oak-06
94	Haynes, Michael	DE	6'4"	283	4	Penn State	FA-07
77	Marshall, Keyonta	DT	6'1"	325	1	Grand Valley State	FA-06
62	McChesney, Matt	DT	6'4"	307	2	Colorado	FA-05
95	Mosley, C.J.	DT	6'2"	312	2	Missouri	T-Min-06
91	Pouha, Sione	DT	6'3"	325	2	Utah	D3-05
63	Robertson, Dewayne	DT	6'1"	317	4	Kentucky	D1-03
67	von Oelhoffen, Kimo	DL	6'4"	299	13	Boise State	FA-Pit-06
90	Wadsworth, Andre	DE	6'4"	272	4	Florida State	FA-07
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Barton, Eric	LB	6'2"	245	8	Maryland	FA-Oak-04
58	Chatham, Matt	LB	6'4"	250	7	South Dakota	FA-NE-06
54	Hobson, Victor	LB	6'0"	252	4	Michigan	D2-03
55	Kassell, Brad	LB	6'3"	242	5	North Texas	FA-Ten-06
56	Schlegel, Anthony	LB	6'1"	251	1	Ohio State	D3a-06
53	Spencer, Cody	LB	6'2"	245	3	North Texas	FA-06
99	Thomas, Bryan	LB	6'4"	266	5	UAB	D1-02
51	Vilma, Jonathan	LB	6'1"	230	3	Miami	D1-04
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
36	Barrett, David	CB	5'10"	195	7	Arkansas	FA-Ari-04
30	Coleman, Drew	CB	5'9"	175	1	TCU	D6-06
26	Coleman, Erik	S	5'10"	200	3	Washington State	D5-04
21	Dyson, Andre	CB	5'10"	183	6	Utah	FA-Sea-06
22	Miller, Justin	CB	5'10"	196	2	Clemson	D2b-05
31	Poteat, Hank	CB	5'10"	195	6	Pittsburgh	FA-06
25	Rhodes, Kerry	S	6'3"	210	2	Louisville	D4-05
33	Smith, Eric	S	6'1"	209	1	Michigan State	D3b-06
38	Thompson, Jamie	S	6'0"	192	1	Oklahoma State	FA-06
42	Washington, Rashad	S	6'1"	217	3	Kansas State	D7d-04
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
85	Dearth, James	LS	6'4"	270	6	Tarleton State	FA-01
7	Graham, Ben	P	6'5"	220	2	Deakin	FA-05
1	Nugent, Mike	K	5'9"	182	2	Ohio State	D2a-05

Head Coach: Eric Mangini (10–6, 0–1 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Brian Schottenheimer
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Sutton

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	89	Jerricho Cotchery
WR	87	Laveranues Coles
LT	60	D'Brickashaw Ferguson
LG	66	Pete Kendall
C	74	Nick Mangold
RG	65	Brandon Moore
RT	68	Anthony Clement
TE	86	Chris Baker
QB	10	Chad Pennington
FB	**37**	**Darian Barnes**
RB	**20**	**Thomas Jones**

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	92	Shaun Ellis
NT	63	Dewayne Robertson
DE	**93**	**Kenyon Coleman**
OLB	99	Bryan Thomas
ILB	51	Jonathan Vilma
ILB	**52**	**David Harris**
OLB	54	Victor Hobson
CB	21	Andre Dyson
CB	**24**	**Darrelle Revis**
SS	25	Kerry Rhodes
FS	26	Erik Coleman

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	1	Mike Nugent
P	7	Ben Graham

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**8**	**Marques Tuiasosopo**
RB	29	Leon Washington
WR	16	Brad Smith
DE	**96**	**David Bowens**
CB	31	Hank Poteat

New acquisitions in **bold**

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OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

FB	Darian Barnes	(Mia)
DE	David Bowens	(Mia)
DE	Kenyon Coleman	(Dal)
RB	Thomas Jones	(Chi)
QB	Marques Tuiasosopo	(Oak)

Key Losses

FB	B.J. Askew	(TB)
RB	Kevan Barlow	(Pit)
QB	Patrick Ramsey	(Den)

2007 Draft

1.	Darrelle Revis	CB	6'0"	197	Pittsburgh
2.	David Harris	ILB	6'2"	239	Michigan
6.	Jacob Bender	OT	6'6"	316	Nicholls State
7.	Chansi Stuckey	WR	5'10"	185	Clemson

The Jets weren't all that active in free agency, although they did pick up two defensive ends they expect to contribute in Coleman and Bowens. Coleman, in fact, is the frontrunner to start at right end while Bowens is a situational pass-rusher. Their biggest splash was acquiring Jones in a trade with the Bears in March. Nobody was able to grab hold of the running back position last season, but the 29-year-old Jones is a proven featured back. Blocking for him will be Barnes. The Jets liked what they saw from him when they played the Dolphins last season and believe he is a better blocker than Askew, although he's not as much of a receiving threat. They've also taken flyers on a couple of former first-round picks who didn't pan out and were out of football, defensive ends Michael Haynes and Andre Wadsworth, although they will try Wadsworth at linebacker. Revis is projected to be the starter at one corner, where four players started for the Jets last season, while Harris will have a chance to start at inside linebacker and appears to be an excellent fit for the 3-4.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Chad Pennington	485	313	3,352	17	16
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Leon Washington	151	650	4.3		4
Cedric Houston	113	374	3.3		5
Kevan Barlow*	131	370	2.8		6
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Laveranues Coles	91	1,098	12.1		6
Jerricho Cotchery	82	961	11.7		6
Chris Bakers	31	300	9.7		4

Kicking: Mike Nugent, 24-27 FGs, 34-35 XPs, 106 points
Tackles: Jonathan Vilma, 113
Sacks: Bryan Thomas, 8.5
Interceptions: Andre Dyson, 4; Kerry Rhodes, 4
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (10–6)

Sept.	10	at Tennessee	W	23–16
Sept.	17	New England	L	17–24
Sept.	24	at Buffalo	W	28–20
Oct.	1	Indianapolis	L	28–31
Oct.	8	at Jacksonville	L	0–41
Oct.	15	Miami	W	20–17
Oct.	22	Detroit	W	31–24
Oct.	29	at Cleveland	L	13–20
Nov.	12	at New England	W	17–14
Nov.	19	Chicago	L	0–10
Nov.	26	Houston	W	26–11
Dec.	3	at Green Bay	W	38–10
Dec.	10	Buffalo	L	13–31
Dec.	17	at Minnesota	W	26–13
Dec.	25	at Miami	W	13–10
Dec.	31	Oakland	W	23– 3
		Postseason		
Jan.	7	at New England	L	16–37

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	305.7	25	-16.4
Rushing	108.6	20	-8.7
Passing	197.1	17	-7.7
Scoring	19.8	18	-0.9
Punt Returns	8.4	20	-0.3
Kick Returns	24.1	5	+1.6
Red Zone TD %	45.8	21	-5.0
Defense			
Total Defense	331.6	20	+9.5
Against Rush	130.3	24	+13.0
Against Pass	201.4	14	-3.4
Points Allowed	18.4	6	-2.3
Interceptions	16	17T	-0.3
Sacks	35	15T	-1.3
Turnover Diff.	0	17T	-

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RAVENS

The Ravens believe they left their mission unaccomplished last season, but the question is do they have enough talent and desire left in their remaining stars to pull it off?

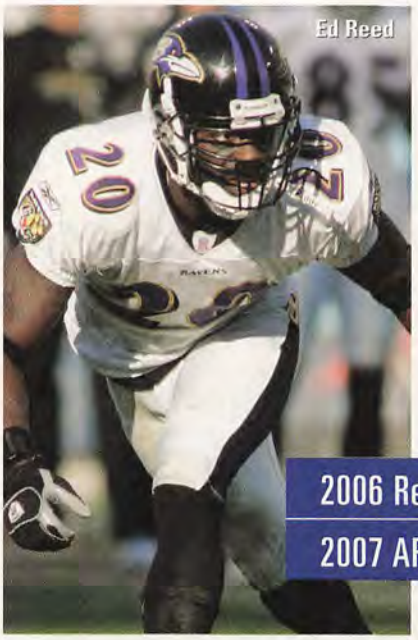
The Ravens have a good blend of youth and experience, but most of the veteran leadership is at the skill positions — with players like quarterback Steve McNair, receiver Derrick Mason, cornerback Samari Rolle, and others like linebacker Ray Lewis and offensive linemen Jonathan Ogden and Mike Flynn. The Ravens certainly have enough talent to get them into the playoffs.

But a year ago, this team looked old and tired, losing 15–6 to the Indianapolis Colts in the AFC divisional playoff. McNair ran out of gas, and so did the Ravens' running game. Head coach Brian Billick called perhaps his worst game of the season.

Most of the same players from 2006 are back in 2007 as the Ravens try to gear up emotionally and physically in what could be the last run for a lot of great players.

Quarterbacks McNair was perfect in the Ravens' short passing game in 2006, but they want to be more vertical and explosive in '07. That doesn't mean they want McNair throwing 35 or 40 times per game, but they will use more two-tight ends or three-receiver sets to replace their traditional I-formation. The idea is for the receivers to get more yards after the catch. Look for McNair to throw more to his receivers this season as opposed to last year when he threw mostly to tight end Todd Heap. The Ravens will still rely on the running game and play-action passes, but they want to keep teams off balance by throwing when they're supposed to run, and running when they're supposed to throw. The key is to keep McNair healthy again. Last year, he missed substantial playing time in only two games because of injuries. The Ravens have a good, stopgap backup quarterback in Kyle Boller. He can put the long ball back into the offense, something the Ravens lack with McNair as the starter. But McNair is more accurate on short to intermediate passes, and he plays with a passion that rubs off on his teammates.

Running Backs The Ravens wanted a change in style, so they said goodbye to former starting running back Jamal Lewis — who signed with the AFC North-rival Browns — and hello to Willis McGahee, who doesn't run with the power of Lewis but changes direction more. So instead of running downhill, the Ravens will be able to attack the perimeter as well as run more traps, sweeps and tosses. With a more versatile McGahee, the Ravens believe they will be less predictable. Still, McGahee isn't much of a home run threat, but he is good at cutting back and is a solid pass receiver. The Ravens have veteran Mike Anderson as the backup. Anderson should be fresh because he didn't run the ball much last season. The No. 3 runner, Musa Smith, might become the top backup if he can stay healthy while in the lineup. The Ravens need to find a proven fullback and have two candidates in Justin Green and rookie Le'Ron McClain, who was a fourth-round draft pick.


Ed Reed

Receivers This is the strongest unit on the offense because of talent and depth. The only concern is that the Ravens don't have a proven legitimate deep threat. Instead, they have two possession-type receivers on the outside with Mason and Mark Clayton. Second-year receiver Demetrius Williams played well at the end of last season and showed he can be a long-ball threat, but he has to become more consistent. The Ravens have depth in backups Clarence Moore and Devard Darling, and they also have one of the league's best tight ends in Heap. The key for the Ravens is being able to stretch defenses, and also show that they can come from behind. Clayton could have a really big year, but Williams has to be the player who steps up the most.

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE RAVENS

The Ravens were within one win of making it to the AFC Championship Game, and they believe they have made the proper upgrades to get into the Super Bowl. The key was improving the running game, and the Ravens have done that by signing Willis McGahee, who is more of an all-purpose runner than previous starter Jamal Lewis. The Ravens also selected Auburn guard Ben Grubbs with their first-round pick in the draft. The Ravens believe these additions, combined with a few more explosive plays offensively and a dominating defense, is the winning formula. Those explosive plays hopefully will come from a change in scheme because the Ravens are shifting from an I-formation to using more two-tight end and three-receiver sets. The Ravens, though, have to win early and can't afford to lose more than three of their first eight games. They have a tough second half schedule that includes three straight games against San Diego, New England and Indianapolis. Other keys are to keep quarterback Steve McNair and left tackle Jonathan Ogden healthy. The Ravens won the AFC North title last year, and seem to be more settled than any other team in the division. Baltimore basically brings back the same group from a year ago, led by some dynamic veterans eager to make one more serious run at the Super Bowl.

2006 Record: 13–3

2007 AFC North Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

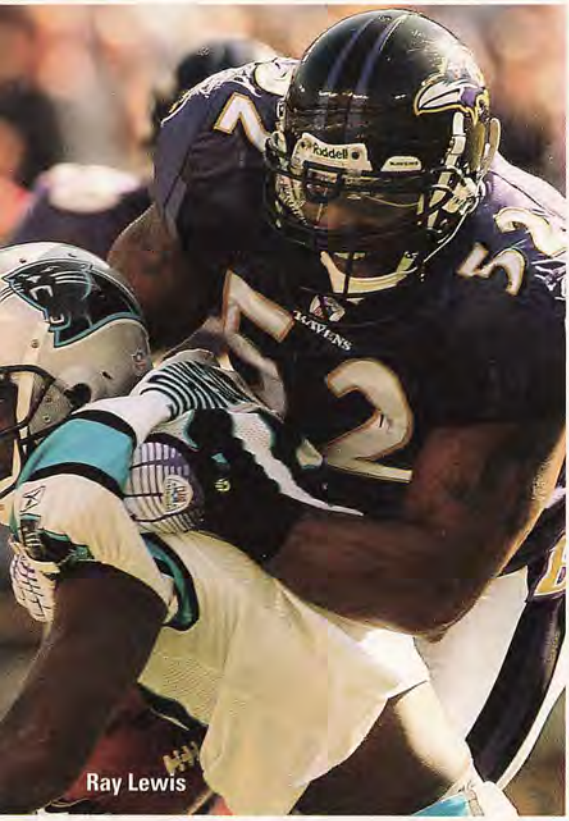
Sept.	10	at Cincinnati	7:00 pm
Sept.	16	N.Y. Jets	4:15 pm
Sept.	23	Arizona	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at Cleveland	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	at San Francisco	4:15 pm
Oct.	14	St. Louis	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Buffalo	1:00 pm
Week 8		BYE	
Nov.	5	at Pittsburgh	8:30 pm
Nov.	11	Cincinnati	4:05 pm
Nov.	18	Cleveland	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	at San Diego	4:15 pm
Dec.	3	New England	8:30 pm
Dec.	9	Indianapolis	8:15 pm
Dec.	16	at Miami	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at Seattle	4:15 pm
Dec.	30	Pittsburgh	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

McNair, Reed: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

Ravens QB

Steve McNair


Ray Lewis

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Top-notch protection The Ravens allowed only 17 sacks (a franchise low) in 2006, including just one in their last six games. For them to have a chance this season, they have to keep injury prone quarterback Steve McNair healthy again.

Getting hot when it gets cold The Ravens have played well in the months of November and December since Brian Billick became head coach in 1999, and they're going to need to do it this year because of a tough second-half schedule. Under Billick, the Ravens are 44–22 in November and December. Only the Patriots and Eagles have been better in those two months during the same time. Both teams have 44–21 records.

First down Ravens Over 80 percent (18 of 22) of Demetrius Williams' receptions earned the Ravens a first down last year. And 11 of those 18 receptions came on third down.

Secret weapon Matt Stover has been the Ravens' secret weapon. He is the second most accurate kicker in NFL history converting on 408-of-487 field goals. He was 28-of-30 last year.

Pick city The Ravens' defense leads the NFL with 218 interceptions since the start of the 1996 season.

Offensive Linemen The Ravens will require more versatility from the offensive line. They want linemen who can pull and make blocks into the second level, but it's questionable if enough of them occupy this roster. Ogden, a Pro Bowl left tackle, is back for another season, while Flynn returns at center, but the rest of this starting group is a little shaky. Third-year player Jason Brown will start at left guard, but he has never played a full 16-game schedule. Adam Terry is listed as the starting right tackle. He has quick feet and a strong work ethic but is unproven as a starter. Veteran Keydrick Vincent will start at right guard and has good power, but it seems only a matter of time before Ben Grubbs, the team's No. 1 pick out of Auburn, replaces him. Second-year player Chris Chester could eventually beat out Flynn.

Defensive Linemen The Ravens have an excellent trio up front, and they are interchangeable. Few teams will be able to run effectively, especially with tackles Haloti Ngata (6'4", 340) and Kelly Gregg, who isn't big (6'0", 310), but can be overpowering. Gregg is underrated, but one of the best run stoppers in the league, and Ngata is a load to move, with enough power to take on two blockers — which is ideal when you have a linebacker like Lewis behind him. Ngata has surprising quickness, and after one year in the NFL, he could become a dominant player in 2007. End/tackle Trevor Pryce could have easily been on the AFC Pro Bowl squad last season. He was outstanding as a pass rusher, and excellent against the run. Depth exists with Dwan Edwards and Justin Bannan.

Linebackers The Ravens lost Pro Bowl outside linebacker Adalius Thomas to the Patriots in free agency, but this unit is still the strongest on the team. Lewis is no longer the most dominant player at his position, but he is still one of the best, and remains the undisputed team leader. He has help in the inside with Bart Scott, who had a breakout year in 2006. Terrell Suggs doubles as a defensive end/outside linebacker, and he creates mismatches coming from the outside as a pass rusher. Fifth-year player Jarret Johnson will replace Thomas, but he is nowhere near as athletic or flexible. The group is thin as far as depth. Gary Stills and Dennis Haley are good special teams players, but not credible starters or even good stopgap players.

Defensive Backs The key will be cornerback Samari Rolle. A year ago, the veteran gave up several big plays and opposing teams went after him. The Ravens believe he came on late in the season, and he will start off the 2007 season with the same confidence. The Ravens have a great cover corner on the other side in Chris McAlister, who can take out any team's top receiver. Unfortunately for the Ravens, none of the young corners like Derrick Martin, Ronnie Prude, Evan Oglesby or David Pittman are ready to challenge Rolle for the starting position. The Ravens are settled at the safety positions with Pro Bowl performer Ed Reed playing free, and Dawan Landry at the strong spot. Overall, the Ravens could have the best secondary in the league, especially adding Oglesby and Prude in nickel and dime coverage.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Willis McGahee, RB
Stands to increase in value with more opportunities playing with veteran quarterback Steve McNair.
Todd Heap, TE
Prolific red zone producer who grabbed six of Baltimore's 12 TD passes in this range last season.

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Specialists The Ravens kicking game is sound. Matt Stover doesn't get much distance on kickoffs, but he is still one of the best field goal kickers in the league. The Ravens have a great young punter in Sam Koch, who became an offensive weapon last season. The return game is questionable. B.J. Sams seemed to be headed for stardom until he broke his ankle. Sams has to show he has fully healed and recovered, or the Ravens may be forced to use rookie Yamon Figurs, a third-round pick out of Kansas State. Figurs can flat out fly and is a threat any time he touches the ball.

Coaching Staff The Ravens have a new offensive coordinator in Rick Neuheisel, but it won't make a big impact. Neuheisel spent last season as the team's quarterback coach and was involved in designing the offense once Jim Fassel was fired after the sixth game. Neuheisel will be innovative and daring, but the Ravens won't get away from their basic philosophy of winning games with defense and controlling field position. Defensive coordinator Rex Ryan signed a new two-year deal, but he is expected to land a head coaching gig by the beginning of the 2008 season. Ryan's previous two defenses ended the season ranked No. 5 in 2005 and No. 1 in 2006.

Lewis: Nick Laham/Getty Images; McGhee: Paul Levy

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
7	Boller, Kyle	QB	6'3"	220	4	California	D1-03
9	McNair, Steve	QB	6'2"	230	12	Alcorn State	T-Ten-06
10	Olson, Drew	QB	6'2"	222	1	UCLA	FA-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
38	Anderson, Mike	RB	6'0"	230	7	Utah	FA-Den-06
30	Daniels, P.J.	RB	5'10"	214	1	Georgia Tech	D4b-06
33	Green, Justin	FB	5'11"	251	2	Montana	D5-05
39	Luchey, Nick	FB	6'2"	273	8	Miami	FA-06
23	McGahee, Willis	RB	6'0"	234	3	Miami	T-Buf-07
40	Ross, Cory	RB	5'6"	201	1	Nebraska	FA-06
32	Smith, Musa	RB	6'0"	232	4	Georgia	D3-03
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
43	Abiamiri, Rob	TE	6'2"	240	1	Maryland	FA-05
80	Bannister, Alex	WR	6'5"	207	6	Eastern Kentucky	FA-06
14	Bryant, Romby	WR	6'1"	181	1	Tulsa	FA-05
89	Clayton, Mark	WR	5'10"	195	2	Oklahoma	D1-05
81	Darling, Devard	WR	6'1"	215	3	Washington State	D3-04
86	Heap, Todd	TE	6'5"	252	6	Arizona State	D1-01
85	Mason, Derrick	WR	5'10"	192	10	Michigan State	FA-05
84	Moore, Clarence	WR	6'6"	220	3	Northern Arizona	D6-04
88	Sypniewski, Quinn	TE	6'6"	270	1	Colorado	D5b-06
83	Wilcox, Daniel	TE	6'1"	245	4	Appalachian State	FA-04
87	Williams, Demetrius	WR	6'2"	197	1	Oregon	D4a-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
60	Brown, Jason	G/C	6'3"	320	2	North Carolina	D4-05
65	Chester, Chris	G/C	6'3"	305	1	Oklahoma	D2-06
62	Flynn, Mike	C	6'3"	305	9	Maine	FA-97
74	Kracalik, Mike	T	6'8"	337	1	San Diego State	FA-05
63	Ndukwe, Ikechuku	G	6'4"	338	1	Northwestern	FA-06
75	Ogden, Jonathan	T	6'9"	345	11	UCLA	D1a-96
76	Pino, Chris	OL	6'5"	315	1	San Diego State	FA-06
69	Rimpf, Brian	G	6'5"	319	3	East Carolina	D7b-04
78	Terry, Adam	T	6'8"	330	2	Syracuse	D2b-05
68	Vincent, Keydrick	G	6'5"	325	6	Ole Miss	FA-Pit-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
77	Ayodele, Remi	DT	6'2"	300	1	Oklahoma	FA-06
94	Bannan, Justin	DT	6'3"	310	5	Colorado	FA-Buf-06
93	Edwards, Dwan	DT	6'3"	315	3	Oregon State	D2-04
72	Ellison, Atiyyah	DT	6'3"	318	2	Missouri	FA-06
97	Gregg, Kelly	DT	6'0"	310	7	Oklahoma	FA-00
92	Ngata, Haloti	DE/DT	6'4"	340	1	Oregon	D1-06
90	Pryce, Trevor	DE/DT	6'5"	286	10	Clemson	FA-Den-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
53	Cody, Dan	OLB	6'5"	255	2	Oklahoma	D2a-05
48	Cottrell, Jim	OLB	6'2"	257	1	New Mexico State	FA-06
58	Haley, Dennis	ILB	6'1"	247	1	Virginia	FA-05
47	Iwuchukwu, Bobby	LB	6'2"	246	1	Purdue	FA-06
95	Johnson, Jarret	OLB	6'3"	270	4	Alabama	D4a-03
50	Johnson, Tim	ILB	6'0"	245	5	Youngstown State	FA-06
52	Lewis, Ray	ILB	6'1"	250	11	Miami	D1b-96
57	Scott, Bart	ILB	6'2"	240	5	Southern Illinois	FA-02
51	Smith, Mike	LB	6'1"	235	2	Texas Tech	D7-05
56	Stills, Gary	OLB	6'2"	250	8	West Virginia	FA-06
55	Suggs, Terrell	OLB	6'3"	260	4	Arizona State	D1a-03
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
35	Ivy, Corey	CB	5'9"	188	6	Oklahoma	FA-StL-06
26	Landry, Dawan	S	6'0"	220	1	Georgia Tech	D5a-06
29	Martin, Derrick	CB	5'10"	202	1	Wyoming	D6b-06
21	McAlister, Chris	CB	6'1"	206	8	Arizona	D1-99
25	Oglesby, Evan	CB	5'10"	185	1	North Alabama	FA-05
24	Pittman, David	CB	5'11"	182	1	Northwestern State	D3-06
27	Prude, Ronnie	CB	5'11"	178	1	LSU	FA-06
20	Reed, Ed	S	5'11"	200	5	Miami	D1-02
22	Rolle, Samari	CB	6'0"	175	9	Florida State	FA-05
36	Sams, B.J.	DB	5'10"	185	3	McNeese State	FA-04
42	Sapp, Gerome	S	6'1"	216	4	Notre Dame	T-Ind-06
28	Winborne, Jamaine	DB	5'10"	202	2	Virginia	FA-05
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
70	Katula, Matt	LS	6'6"	272	2	Wisconsin	FA-05
4	Koch, Sam	P	6'1"	230	1	Nebraska	D6a-06
3	Stover, Matt	K	5'11"	178	17	Louisiana Tech	FA-NYG-91

Head Coach: Brian Billick (75–53, 5–3 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Rick Neuheisel
Defensive Coordinator: Rex Ryan

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	89	Mark Clayton
WR	85	Derrick Mason
LT	75	Jonathan Ogden
LG	60	Jason Brown
C	62	Mike Flynn
RG	68	Keydrick Vincent
RT	78	Adam Terry
TE	86	Todd Heap
QB	9	Steve McNair
FB	33	Justin Green
RB	**23**	**Willis McGahee**

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	90	Trevor Pryce
NT	97	Kelly Gregg
DE	92	Haloti Ngata
OLB	55	Terrell Suggs
ILB	57	Bart Scott
ILB	52	Ray Lewis
OLB	95	Jarret Johnson
CB	21	Chris McAlister
CB	22	Samari Rolle
SS	26	Dawan Landry
FS	20	Ed Reed

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	3	Matt Stover
P	4	Sam Koch

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	7	Kyle Boller
OL	65	Chris Chester
WR	87	Demetrius Williams
TE	88	Quinn Sypniewski
RS	36	B.J. Sams

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: M&T Bank Stadium (70,107)
Surface: Field Turf
www.baltimoreravens.com
Ticket Info: 410-261-7283
Training Camp: McDaniel College (Westminster, MD)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

RB	Willis McGahee (Buf)	

Key Losses

DT	Aubrayo Franklin (SF)
RB	Jamal Lewis (Cle)
FB	Ovie Mughelli (Atl)
G	Edwin Mulitalo (Det)
T	Tony Pashos (Jac)
LB	Adalius Thomas (NE)

2007 Draft

1.	Ben Grubbs	G	6'3"	314	Auburn
3.	Yamon Figurs	WR	5'11"	174	Kansas State
3.	Marshall Yanda	G	6'4"	304	Iowa
4.	Antwan Barnes	OLB	6'1"	240	FIU
4.	Le'Ron McClain	FB	6'0"	257	Alabama
5.	Troy Smith	QB	6'1"	213	Ohio State
6.	Prescott Burgess	OLB	6'3"	235	Michigan

The Ravens No. 1 priority in the offseason was to upgrade their running game which was ranked No. 25 in 2006. Baltimore replaced Lewis with McGahee, who should give the Ravens more versatility and make them less predictable as far as formations and playcalling are concerned. The Ravens also picked up two offensive linemen in the draft, led by Grubbs, the No. 1 pick out of Auburn. On the defensive side, the Ravens only lost one quality starter from the league's No. 1 defense in Thomas. He simply can't be replaced. Jarret Johnson will attempt it anyway. He is a solid player, especially against the run. The Ravens also added return specialist Figurs out of Kansas State, who will fill in for injured return man B.J. Sams, who missed the final quarter of the season with a broken ankle.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Steve McNair	468	295	3,050	16	12
Kyle Boller	55	33	485	5	2
Rushing	**Att.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Jamal Lewis*	314		1,132	3.6	9
Mike Anderson	39		183	4.7	1
Receiving	**Rec.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Todd Heap	73		765	10.5	6
Derrick Mason	68		750	11.0	2
Mark Clayton	67		939	14.0	5

Kicking: Matt Stover, 28-30 FGs, 37-37 XPs, 121 points
Tackles: Ray Lewis, 103; Bart Scott, 103
Sacks: Trevor Pryce, 13
Interceptions: Chris McAlister, 6
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (13–3)

Sept.	10	at Tampa Bay	W	27– 0
Sept.	17	Oakland	W	28– 6
Sept.	24	at Cleveland	W	15–14
Oct.	1	San Diego	W	16–13
Oct.	9	at Denver	L	3–13
Oct.	15	Carolina	L	21–23
Oct.	29	at New Orleans	W	35–22
Nov.	5	Cincinnati	W	26–20
Nov.	12	at Tennessee	W	27–26
Nov.	19	Atlanta	W	24–10
Nov.	26	Pittsburgh	W	27– 0
Nov.	30	at Cincinnati	L	7–13
Dec.	10	at Kansas City	W	20–10
Dec.	17	Cleveland	W	27–17
Dec.	24	at Pittsburgh	W	31– 7
Dec.	31	Buffalo	W	19– 7
		Postseason		
Jan.	13	Indianapolis	L	6–15

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	317.0	17	-5.1
Rushing	102.3	25	-15.0
Passing	214.7	11	+9.9
Scoring	22.1	12T	+1.4
Punt Returns	7.8	25T	-0.9
Kick Returns	23.2	10	+0.7
Red Zone TD %	42.3	28	-8.5
Defense			
Total Defense	264.1	1	-58.0
Against Rush	75.9	2	-41.4
Against Pass	188.2	6	-16.6
Points Allowed	12.6	1	-8.1
Interceptions	28	1	+11.7
Sacks	60	2	+23.7
Turnover Diff.	+17	1	-

BENGALS

Coming off the franchise's first division title and postseason appearance in 15 years, 2006 was nothing short of a major disappointment for the Bengals. Needing one win in their final three games to make the playoffs as a wild card, the Bengals lost all three games to finish 8–8, including a 23–17 loss in overtime to rival Pittsburgh in the season finale. There were breakdowns in all three units — offense, defense and special teams — that contributed to those failures. A couple of seasons ago a .500 season would have resulted in a "nice try" from the fans, but those days are past, and nothing short of a return to the postseason will suffice in 2007.

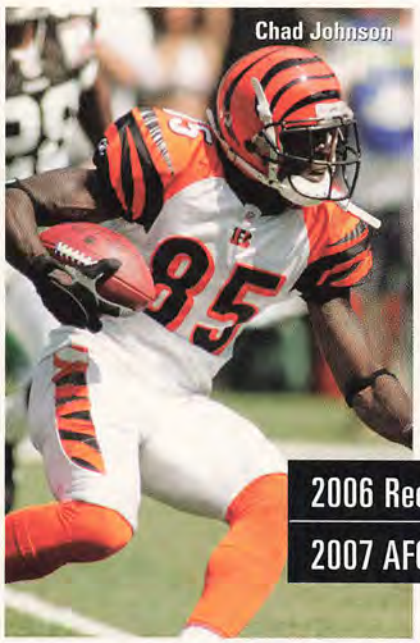
The good news for the Bengals is that as long as Carson Palmer is taking the snaps they will have a shot to win any game, and this year Palmer enters the season without any lingering questions about the health of his left knee. Palmer has thrown 60 TDs against only 25 interceptions in 1,029 pass attempts the last two seasons and has an arsenal of weapons to get the ball to in receivers Chad Johnson, T.J. Houshmandzadeh and running back Rudi Johnson.

The NFL has suspended No. 3 receiver Chris Henry for the first eight games, and the Bengals must be creative in devising a way to make up for his lost production (15 touchdowns in 67 receptions the last two seasons.) One way would be for the defense to improve from the No. 30 ranking it finished with last season.

The defense got younger with the release of linebacker Brian Simmons and allowing cornerback Tory James to leave via free agency, but that puts the spotlight on second-year players Ahmad Brooks and Johnathan Joseph to step up their play. Unlike the offense, the Cincinnati defense doesn't have any proven and consistent difference-makers.

Quarterbacks Palmer has had a full offseason of working with teammates instead of working on rehabbing his left knee, and that bodes well for the Bengals. Palmer worked his way back from knee surgery last year and started all 16 games while becoming the first quarterback in franchise history to throw for more than 4,000 yards in a season. He has been selected to the Pro Bowl each of the last two seasons. Palmer fell in his accuracy rate last season, dropping from a league-best 67.8 percent in 2005 to 62.3 percent last season — still a very good percentage, but that decrease helps explain Cincinnati's poor 35.8 percent conversion rate on third downs. Expect Palmer's accuracy to improve this season. The Bengals have decided to go with journeyman Doug Johnson as their No. 2 man. Johnson was the third quarterback last season, but he's impressed the coaches with his knowledge of the offense. The Bengals drafted Jeff Rowe from Nevada in the fifth round.

Running Backs Johnson has carried the ball 1,039 times in the three seasons since Corey Dillon was traded away to New England, and he has consistently produced. He's rushed for 12 touchdowns in each of those seasons and consistently gets the tough yardage, but he is not a back who will break off the big run. His longest run of last season was for 22 yards, and he's had only seven runs of 30 or more yards in his career. Chris Perry was drafted to complement Johnson in that manner, as well as get the ball as a receiver out of the backfield, but there is a good chance he will start the season on the physically unable to perform list for a second straight year. Perry suffered a broken right fibula just above his ankle last November at Cleveland, and the team is concerned enough about his recovery that it drafted Kenny Irons in the second round this year. Kenny Watson is a solid backup, reliable as a blocker and sure-handed. Fullback Jeremi Johnson was a Pro Bowl alternate last season.


Chad Johnson

Receivers Johnson and Houshmandzadeh comprise one of the NFL's premier pass-catching duos, and they'll have to pick their games up a notch this season. The former

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE BENGALS

The Bengals were Team Turmoil in 2006 with nine players getting arrested during the calendar year. The consequences have spilled into 2007, as wide receiver Chris Henry has been suspended for the first eight games and the football future of linebacker Odell Thurman remains an uncertainty as he hopes to be reinstated in July following a one-year league suspension. Once again the Bengals will rely heavily on the play of Pro Bowl quarterback Carson Palmer and the offense to carry their postseason hopes. Those hopes blossomed in 2005 with a division title and home playoff game, but with a second straight postseason berth one win away, the Bengals lost their final three games to finish a disappointing 8–8 last season. The defense has gotten younger in the back seven in an attempt to improve from No. 30 in overall defense and No. 31 (tie) against the pass. They were a more respectable 17th in points allowed, but all of those numbers have to improve before they will be a legitimate Super Bowl contender. The Bengals were awful on both sides of the ball last season in third down situations. The offense was 25th in the league in third down conversions (35.8 percent), while the defense allowed 41.7 percent of third downs to turn into first downs, 22nd in the NFL.

2006 Record: 8–8

2007 AFC North Prediction: 2nd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	10	Baltimore	7:00 pm
Sept.	16	at Cleveland	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Seattle	4:05 pm
Oct.	1	New England	8:30 pm
Week	5	BYE	
Oct.	14	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	N.Y. Jets	4:05 pm
Oct.	28	Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	at Buffalo	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	at Baltimore	4:05 pm
Nov.	18	Arizona	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	Tennessee	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Pittsburgh	8:15 pm
Dec.	9	St. Louis	1:00 pm
Dec.	15	at San Francisco	8:15 pm
Dec.	23	Cleveland	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	at Miami	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Johnson: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports
Palmer: Andy Lyons/Getty Images

Bengals QB
Carson Palmer

Rudi Johnson

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Give me that The Bengals have produced 75 takeaways in the last two years, a total only the Chicago Bears have bettered. They led the NFL with 44 takeaways in 2005 and added 31 more last season. They have a plus-31 turnover ratio the last two seasons and are plus-37 in four seasons under Marvin Lewis.

Primed and ready The Bengals will host two Monday Night Football games for the first time in franchise history this season and have a total of four prime-time games on the schedule. They open the season Sept. 10 against defending division champ Baltimore in the first game of the league's MNF doubleheader and then host New England on Oct. 1. They are scheduled to play at Pittsburgh on Sunday night Dec. 2, although the game could be switched as part of the NFL's flex scheduling, and then at San Francisco on Dec. 15 for a Saturday night contest against the 49ers.

Move over Receiver Chad Johnson is one big game away from becoming the franchise's all-time leading receiver in terms of yards, and with a typical Chad Johnson season he'll also move to the top of the Bengals' list in career receptions. Johnson needs 177 yards to move past Isaac Curtis (7,101 yards) and 65 catches to slide by Carl Pickens and his 530 receptions.

Oregon State teammates have combined to catch 520 passes for 7,090 yards and 45 touchdowns in the last three seasons. Houshmandzadeh led the team with 90 receptions and topped the 1,000-yard mark for the first time last season, while Johnson became the first Bengals player to lead the NFL in receiving yards with 1,369. A big chunk of that — 765 yards to be exact — came in a five-game stretch that helped the Bengals put themselves into playoff position. Henry's absence leaves hope that Tab Perry and Antonio Chatman can help stretch the field after having their respective seasons shortened last year by injury. Perry in particular appeared poised to play an increased role but suffered a hip injury in Week 2.

Offensive Linemen Injuries took their toll on the unit last season, and it showed at times, but it also gave several young players a chance for experience, which will pay off this season. Center Rich Braham retired after 13 seasons, but Eric Ghiaciuc started 13 times last season and is settled into the position. Andrew Whitworth and Stacy Andrews will vie to replace the departed Eric Steinbach at left guard, while veteran Bobbie Williams returns at right guard. The Bengals have the luxury of possessing two premier tackles in Levi Jones (left) and Willie Anderson (right). Jones missed 10 games last season due to arthroscopic knee surgery and needs to return to form for the Bengals offense to be at its best.

Defensive Linemen Defensive end Justin Smith was given the franchise tag with the hope that a long-term deal could be reached. Smith is arguably the team's best defensive player. He can play every down and is equally good against the run and the pass, but the knock on him is that he has never reached double digits in sacks. Robert Geathers did reach that milestone last season with 10.5 sacks and was rewarded with a six-year extension. This is an aging group, especially at tackle, where three of the top four players are over 30. Second-year pro Domata Peko is the exception and may earn more playing time this season.

Linebackers The Bengals bolstered what was looking like a very inexperienced group of linebackers by signing Edgerton Hartwell in early May. Hartwell thrived under Lewis' tutelage when the two were in Baltimore together. Hartwell's arrival will move Landon Johnson over to the strong side. Johnson, who has started 37 games in three years, is a proven player, having led the team in tackles twice. Second-year pro Ahmad Brooks will man the middle.

Defensive Backs A return of the Pro Bowl version of Deltha O'Neal, the player who picked off 10 passes and didn't allow a completion of more than 20 yards in 2005, is paramount if the Bengals defense is going to see real improvement in 2007. Johnathan Joseph proved worthy of being a first-round pick last season, and the Bengals went cornerback in the first round again this year with Michigan's Leon Hall, so they have the makings of a talented cover group. The Bengals are young at safety behind starters Madieu Williams and Dexter Jackson.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Carson Palmer, QB
One of the few quarterbacks capable of 30+ TD passes and who poses a threat to Peyton Manning.

Chad Johnson, WR
Scoring production stands to improve with Chris Henry suspended for the first eight games.

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Specialists Of all of the areas to break down last season, the kicking game at the end of the season was the most surprising. A botched extra point snap against Denver went off of the hands of holder (and punter) Kyle Larson as the Bengals lost 24–23 on Christmas Eve. The next week, against Pittsburgh, kicker Shayne Graham missed a 39-yard field goal with eight seconds left in regulation that would have put the Bengals into the playoffs. Graham hadn't missed inside 43 yards all season prior to that. Before those calamities, the duo was having a very good season. Larson finished with a net average of 38.6, tied for fifth in the NFL, and he was plus-15 in punts inside the 20 vs. touchbacks. Graham is the franchise's all-time accuracy leader at 86.4 percent and put 13 kickoffs into the end zone, a career high.

Coaching Staff Marvin Lewis has built a stable staff, having made only one change to his defensive coordinator in four previous seasons and retaining offensive coordinator Bob Bratkowski and special teams coordinator Darrin Simmons throughout. He did lose wide receivers coach Hue Jackson to Atlanta (offensive coordinator) but replaced Jackson with Mike Sheppard, a veteran of 13 NFL seasons. Running backs coach Jim Anderson is back for his 24th season. He came to the club in 1984 when Sam Wyche was hired as the head coach and has tutored five different running backs to 1,000-yard seasons.

Johnson, Palmer: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
11	Johnson, Doug	QB	6'2"	218	6	Florida	FA-06
9	Palmer, Carson	QB	6'5"	230	4	USC	D1-03
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
31	Johnson, Jeremi	FB	5'11"	260	4	Western Kentucky	D4b-03
32	Johnson, Rudi	HB	5'10"	214	6	Auburn	D4-01
37	Manderino, Chris	FB	6'0"	233	1	California	FA-06
23	Perry, Chris	HB	6'0"	224	3	Michigan	D1-04
33	Watson, Kenny	HB	6'0"	218	5	Penn State	FA-03
30	Whitehead, Terrence	HB	5'10"	215	1	Oregon	FA-06
35	Wilson, Quincy	HB	5'9"	220	1	West Virginia	PS-Atl-04
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
81	Brazell, Bennie	WR	6'0"	176	1	LSU	D7b-06
83	Chatman, Antonio	WR	5'8"	182	4	Cincinnati	FA-06
49	Day, Tim	TE	6'3"	255	1	Oregon	FA-06
80	Ghent, Ronnie	TE	6'2"	253	1	Louisville	FA-04
18	Green, Skyler	WR	5'9"	190	1	LSU	W-Dal-06
89	Guenther, Gregg	TE	6'8"	255	2	USC	FA-06
15	Henry, Chris	WR	6'4"	200	2	West Virginia	D3-05
16	Holt, Glenn	WR	6'1"	193	1	Kentucky	FA-06
84	Houshmandzadeh, T.J.	WR	6'1"	199	6	Oregon State	D7-01
85	Johnson, Chad	WR	6'1"	192	6	Oregon State	D2-01
82	Kelly, Reggie	TE	6'4"	255	8	Mississippi State	FA-Atl-03
10	McNeal, Reggie	WR	6'2"	205	1	Texas A&M	D6-06
88	Perry, Tab	WR	6'3"	208	2	UCLA	D6-05
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
71	Anderson, Willie	T	6'5"	340	11	Auburn	D1-96
79	Andrews, Stacy	G	6'7"	342	3	Ole Miss	D4c-04
53	Ghiaciuc, Eric	C	6'4"	302	2	Central Michigan	D4-05
76	Jones, Levi	T	6'5"	307	5	Arizona State	D1-02
70	Kieft, Adam	T	6'7"	328	2	Central Michigan	D5-05
75	Kooistra, Scott	T	6'6"	320	4	NC State	D7a-03
62	Livings, Nate	G	6'4"	315	1	LSU	FA-06
73	Reuber, Alan	T	6'6"	307	2	Texas A&M	FA-06
	Stepanovich, Alex	C	6'4"	312	3	Ohio State	FA-Ari-07
77	Whitworth, Andrew	G/T	6'7"	339	1	LSU	D2-06
64	Wilkerson, Ben	C	6'4"	305	1	LSU	CFA-05
63	Williams, Bobbie	G	6'4"	345	7	Arkansas	FA-Phi-04
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
95	Adams, Sam	DT	6'3"	350	13	Texas A&M	FA-Buf-06
68	Fanene, Jonathan	DE	6'4"	295	2	Utah	D7-05
91	Geathers, Robert	DE	6'3"	265	3	Georgia	D4b-04
78	Henderson, Eric	DE	6'2"	266	1	Georgia Tech	FA-06
96	Myers, Michael	DT	6'2"	300	9	Alabama	FA-Den-07
94	Peko, Domata	DT	6'3"	319	1	Michigan State	D4-06
98	Robinson, Bryan	DE	6'4"	304	10	Fresno State	FA-Mia-05
92	Rucker, Frostee	DE	6'3"	267	1	USC	D3-06
90	Smith, Justin	DE	6'4"	275	6	Missouri	D1-01
97	Thornton, John	DT	6'3"	297	8	West Virginia	FA-Ten-03
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Brooks, Ahmad	LB	6'3"	259	1	Virginia	SD3-06
57	Frazier, Andre	LB	6'5"	234	2	Cincinnati	FA-06
	Hartwell, Edgerton	LB	6'1"	250	6	Western Illinois	FA-Atl-07
93	Jeanty, Rashad	LB	6'2"	245	1	UCF	FA-06
59	Johnson, Landon	LB	6'2"	228	3	Purdue	D3b-04
58	Miller, Caleb	LB	6'3"	225	3	Arkansas	D3a-04
52	Nicholson, AJ	LB	6'1"	240	1	Florida State	D5-06
99	Pollack, David	LB	6'2"	255	2	Georgia	D1-05
51	Thurman, Odell	LB	6'0"	236	2	Georgia	D2-05
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
21	Bauman, Rashad	CB	5'8"	184	5	Oregon	W-Was-04
27	Brooks, Greg	CB	5'11"	182	3	Southern Miss	D6-04
36	Busing, John	S	6'2"	221	1	Miami (Ohio)	FA-06
28	Jackson, Dexter	S	6'0"	210	8	Florida State	FA-TB-06
44	Jones, Herana-Daze	S	5'11"	205	1	Indiana	FA-05
22	Joseph, Johnathan	CB	5'11"	193	1	South Carolina	D1-06
43	Kilmer, Ethan	S	6'0"	204	1	Penn State	D7a-06
42	Mitchell, Anthony	S	6'1"	220	7	Tuskegee	FA-04
24	O'Neal, Deltha	CB	5'11"	194	7	California	T-Den-04
25	Ratliff, Keiwan	CB	5'11"	188	3	Florida	D2a-04
29	Williams, Brandon	CB	5'11"	186	1	Michigan	FA-06
40	Williams, Madieu	S	6'1"	203	3	Maryland	D2b-04
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
17	Graham, Shayne	K	6'0"	200	6	Virginia Tech	W-Car-03
19	Larson, Kyle	P	6'1"	204	3	Nebraska	FA-04
48	St. Louis, Brad	LS/TE	6'3"	243	7	Missouri State	D7-00

Head Coach: Marvin Lewis (35-29, 0-1 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Bob Bratkowski
Defensive Coordinator: Chuck Bresnahan

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	85	Chad Johnson
WR	84	T.J. Houshmandzadeh
LT	76	Levi Jones
LG	77	Andrew Whitworth
C	53	Eric Ghiaciuc
RG	63	Bobbie Williams
RT	71	Willie Anderson
TE	82	Reggie Kelly
QB	9	Carson Palmer
FB	31	Jeremi Johnson
RB	32	Rudi Johnson

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	98	Bryan Robinson
DT	97	John Thornton
DT	95	Sam Adams
DE	90	Justin Smith
WLB		**Edgerton Hartwell**
MLB	50	Ahmad Brooks
SLB	59	Landon Johnson
CB	24	Deltha O'Neal
CB	22	Johnathan Joseph
S	40	Madieu Williams
S	28	Dexter Jackson

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	17	Shayne Graham
P	19	Kyle Larson

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	11	Doug Johnson
RB	33	Kenny Watson
WR	88	Tab Perry
DE	91	Robert Geathers
S	43	Ethan Kilmer

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Paul Brown Stadium (65,535)
Surface: Field turf
www.bengals.com
Ticket Info: 800-621-8383
Training Camp: Georgetown (Ky.) College

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

LB	Edgerton Hartwell (Atl)
DT	Michael Myers (Den)
C	Alex Stepanovich (Ari)
S	Kevin Kaesviharn (NO)
LB	Brian Simmons (NO)
DT	Shaun Smith (Cle)
LG	Eric Steinbach (Cle)
TE	Tony Stewart (Oak)
WR	Kelley Washington (NE)
LB	Marcus Wilkins (Atl)
QB	Anthony Wright (NYG)

Key Losses

C	Rich Braham (retired)
CB	Tory James (NE)

2007 Draft

1.	Leon Hall	CB	5'11"	193	Michigan
2.	Kenny Irons	RB	5'11"	195	Auburn
4.	Marvin White	FS	6'1"	199	TCU
5.	Jeff Rowe	QB	6'5"	226	Nevada
6.	Matt Toeaina	DT	6'2"	307	Oregon
7.	Dan Santucci	G	6'3"	296	Notre Dame
7.	Nedu Ndukwe	SS	6'2"	206	Notre Dame

The Bengals are sure to pick up a few compensatory picks in the 2008 NFL Draft after losing former starters Steinbach and Kaesviharn while making few additions themselves. Marvin Lewis has built the roster to handle such losses. The biggest losses might be to the special teams as Kaesviharn, Stewart and Wilkins were mainstays on those units. The decision to release Simmons was partly motivated by the salary cap (the team saved $2.8 million) and partly performance-related as the Bengals decided now was the time for a youth movement at linebacker. Getting Hall with the No. 18 pick in the draft left the Bengals jubilant, while the choice of Irons in the second round showed just how much they are concerned about the health of Chris Perry. Picking up the hard-hitting White in the fourth round could end up being their best pick of the draft.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Carson Palmer	520	324	4,035	28	13
Rushing	**Att.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Rudi Johnson	341		1,309	3.8	12
Kenny Watson	25		138	5.5	1
Receiving	**Rec.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Chad Johnson	87		1,369	15.7	7
T.J. Houshmandzadeh	90		1,081	12.0	9
Chris Henry	36		605	16.8	9

Kicking: Shayne Graham, 25-30 FGs, 40-42 XPs, 115 points
Tackles: Landon Johnson, 112; Caleb Miller, 99
Sacks: Robert Geathers, 10.5
Interceptions: Kevin Kaesviharn*, 6
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	10	at Kansas City	W	23–10
Sept.	17	Cleveland	W	34–17
Sept.	24	at Pittsburgh	W	28–20
Oct.	1	New England	L	13–38
Oct.	15	at Tampa Bay	L	13–14
Oct.	22	Carolina	W	17–14
Oct.	29	Atlanta	L	27–29
Nov.	5	at Baltimore	L	20–26
Nov.	12	San Diego	L	41–49
Nov.	19	at New Orleans	W	31–16
Nov.	26	at Cleveland	W	30– 0
Nov.	30	Baltimore	W	13– 7
Dec.	10	Oakland	W	27–10
Dec.	18	at Indianapolis	L	16–34
Dec.	24	at Denver	L	23–24
Dec.	31	Pittsburgh (OT)	L	17–23

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	341.4	8	+19.3
Rushing	101.8	26	-15.5
Passing	239.6	6	+34.8
Scoring	23.3	8	+2.6
Punt Returns	6.6	29	-2.1
Kick Returns	20.5	29	-2.0
Red Zone TD %	57.7	6T	+6.9
Defense			
Total Defense	355.1	30	+33.0
Against Rush	116.4	15	-0.9
Against Pass	238.6	31T	+33.8
Points Allowed	20.7	17	-
Interceptions	19	8T	+2.7
Sacks	35	15T	-1.3
Turnover Diff.	+7	6T	-

BROWNS

CLEVELAND

The Cleveland Browns have been an abysmal franchise since 1999, with one winning season, four head coaches, six offensive coordinators, 12 starting quarterbacks and more rebirths than the Phoenix.

The only constant with the Browns has been inconstancy. The latest rebirth of the team started two years ago when Romeo Crennel was hired as coach and Phil Savage as general manager. But the team has won 10 games in two years and suffered an inordinate amount of bad luck due to injury.

But in April, Savage somehow managed a draft that landed him a franchise left tackle in Joe Thomas and a franchise quarterback in Brady Quinn.

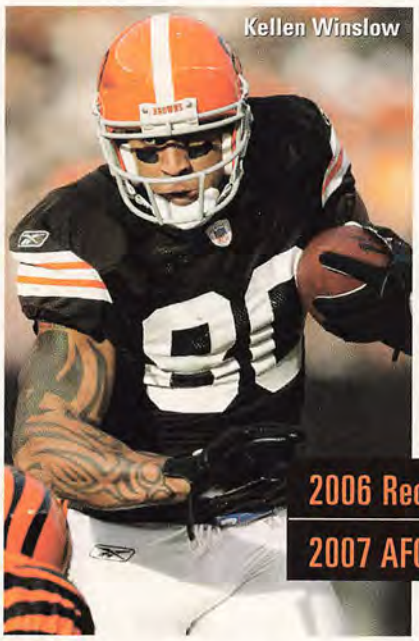
A fan base that had been scarred by watching bad teams and bad football suddenly became interested, and the Browns had something to hang their helmet on. Now they must take that energy to the field and hope that Thomas really is the real deal at tackle and Quinn can make the successful jump from college to the pros as a rookie. They must hope for improvement in a lot of other areas as well — especially on defense, because the Browns are a long, long way from legitimate.

The draft only takes them closer.

Quarterbacks Browns quarterbacks led the league in turnovers last season. Between them, Charlie Frye and Derek Anderson threw 25 interceptions and lost eight fumbles. Enter Quinn, the second of the team's first-round draft picks. In his last two seasons at Notre Dame, Quinn threw 69 touchdowns and 14 interceptions. He also completed more than 60 percent of his passes in each of the two seasons. Quinn will be the Browns' quarterback at some point, and Charlie Weis, his coach at Notre Dame, believes Quinn is the most NFL-ready signal-caller to come out of college in years — thanks, of course, to the pro-style offense Weis ran. The question is when he takes over. The last thing the Browns want to do is rush Quinn onto the field and ruin him the way a previous staff did with Tim Couch. But it's only a matter of time until he starts.

Running Backs A year ago Reuben Droughns was coming off back-to-back 1,200-yard seasons, one in Denver, one in Cleveland. Droughns entered the season as the team's starting back after being rewarded with a new contract. This offseason he was jettisoned to the Giants after he dropped to 758 yards in 2006. His replacement: Jamal Lewis, let go by the Ravens three years after he topped 2,000 yards in Baltimore. Since that 2003 season, though, Lewis has not looked like the same back. His per-carry average has dropped from 4.3 yards in 2004 to 3.4 and 3.6 yards the last two years. Savage believes in the back he helped draft in Baltimore, but the word on Lewis is that he's no longer a breakaway back, but one who can get three or four yards between the tackles. That sounds a lot like Droughns.

Receivers Braylon Edwards was the Browns' biggest enigma in 2006. Edwards had a season that included several dropped passes, being late for a meeting because he fell asleep in the players lounge, a sideline tirade at his offensive line that looked like a tirade at his quarterback and the calling out of some talented Carolina cornerbacks. When Ohio State played Michigan, his alma mater, he was advised not to go by several veterans. He helicoptered to Columbus anyway and was late getting back to the Browns' Saturday night meeting because of it. Edwards has immense talent, but his immaturity showed. The other main question at receiver is at tight end, where Kellen Winslow still deals with the after-effects of his motorcycle accident in the spring of 2005. Winslow missed the 2005 season and came back to tie a team record with 89 receptions in 2006. But he did it on one leg — after the season Winslow needed microfracture surgery, and nobody knows how long it will take him to


Kellen Winslow

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE BROWNS

The Browns have set marks for misfortune and futility since the team returned from a three-year hiatus in 1999. This season looks no different — despite the optimism generated by the drafting of Joe Thomas and Brady Quinn in the first round. A brutal opening schedule makes things tough right away. Three of the Browns' first four games are against the three teams picked ahead of them in the tough AFC North. The fifth is in New England. That leaves absolutely no margin for early error or growth; the Browns have to be ready from minute one of the first game. The schedule really could not be more challenging. Any of the games that could have built confidence in a young team are late in the season, and all the games that could defeat a team's psyche — against Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Baltimore and New England — are early. The Browns are hoping that Quinn defies the odds and succeeds as a rookie quarterback. That Braylon Edwards matures. That Kellen Winslow will fully recover from microfracture surgery. And that Jamal Lewis still has something left. They also are hoping that their run defense improves following minor tinkering on the defense. Turnarounds happen a lot in the NFL. But with this team, all of that coming together is a long, long shot. It looks like another last-place finish in the very difficult AFC North.

2006 Record: 4–12

2007 AFC North Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Oakland	4:05 pm
Sept.	30	Baltimore	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	at New England	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	Miami	1:00 pm
Week 7		BYE	
Oct.	28	at St. Louis	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	Seattle	4:05 pm
Nov.	11	at Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at Baltimore	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	Houston	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Arizona	4:05 pm
Dec.	9	at N.Y. Jets	4:15 pm
Dec.	16	Buffalo	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	San Francisco	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Winslow: Joe Robbins/Getty Images
Edwards: Paul Spinelli/Getty Images

Browns WR

Braylon Edwards

Kamerion Wimbley

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Division dumper The Browns have been abysmal in the AFC North in the Romeo Crennel era. The Browns did not win a game in the division last year, and in two years have gone 1–11, the only win a meaningless season finale in 2005.

Running full For seven years, the Browns have been stumblebums in trying to stop the run. Last season, they gave up 142 yards per game. Since 1999, the Browns have given up 171, 157, 138, 130, 132, 145, 138 and 142 yards rushing per game.

Not so grand opening The computer that makes the NFL schedule did not help the Browns this season. Three of the first four games are at home against the AFC North, with the fifth game in New England. After an Oct. 21 bye, the Browns go on the road for three of four games.

Motorcycle saga Kellen Winslow tied a team mark with 89 receptions last season but was playing on a knee that needed microfracture surgery after the season. Winslow's career clearly will be cut short and hampered by the motorcycle accident after his rookie season.

get back to full speed. Joe Jurevicius will be the Browns' other receiver, with Steve Heiden the second tight end. Both are as dependable and professional as they come.

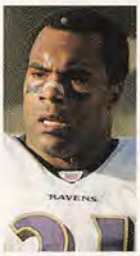
Offensive Linemen The Browns struggled blocking for the run (3.6 yards per carry) and protecting the passer (54 sacks), which pretty much covers the requirements for an offensive line. Revamping the group was a major offseason focus, and it started on the first day of free agency when the Browns gave Eric Steinbach the largest contract a guard had ever received — seven years, $49.5 million. They then used the third overall pick in the draft on Thomas. Those two additions buttress the left side of the line, and the re-signing of center Hank Fraley ensures the Browns have a starting center; LeCharles Bentley's career remains in question after he tore a patella tendon and was slowed by a staph infection in 2006. The right side, though, has questions. There is no defined starter at right guard. Seth McKinney, Fred Matua and Isaac Sowells will compete there — though it's possible that tackle Kevin Shaffer could take over. Ryan Tucker is a solid right tackle, but he struggled with personal issues last season that caused him to miss seven games.

Defensive Linemen The Browns' three line starters in the 3-4 all will be 30 or older this season. Nose tackle Ted Washington leads the geriatric parade at 39. Orpheus Roye will be 34, and free agent signee Robaire Smith turns 30 in November. Their prominent backups — Simon Fraser, Shaun Smith — need time to grow. The Browns would have liked to bolster this unit in the draft, but finding 3-4 linemen is a challenge. So the Browns will have to make do. And a team that has not stopped the run since 1999 likely will struggle again.

Linebackers Kamerion Wimbley had an excellent rookie season, with 11 sacks. He will line up opposite Willie McGinest, whose veteran presence was a large help last season. The team will start training camp with Andra Davis and D'Qwell Jackson inside, but the player who bears watching is Leon Williams. Williams played very well as a rookie. He was used as the "spy" to shadow Mike Vick in one of the Browns' few wins, and he played extremely well when Jackson missed the final three games after he needed toe surgery. Williams is a more physical player than both Davis and Jackson, and he seems to have very solid football instincts. It may be impossible to keep him off the field.

Defensive Backs The Browns have corner concerns. Leigh Bodden, who struggled with sprained ankles last season, is a legitimate starter — provided he can stay healthy. But the other starter at corner is unknown. Gary Baxter is still coming back from tearing both patella tendons, and the team released Daylon McCutcheon in the offseason — a curious move given corner was a need. Second-round draft pick Eric Wright will be given every chance to win the job. Wright, who finished his career at UNLV, was considered first-round worthy, but an off-field incident during his time at USC slid him to the second round. At safety, the team lost its defensive quarterback when Brian Russell signed with Seattle as a free agent. But the Browns feel that Brodney Pool can step in for Russell and the team will not miss much. The other starting safety — Sean Jones — had a very good season in 2006.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS



Braylon Edwards, WR
Stock could be down if Brady Quinn starts at QB, but his big play potential will ensure value.

Jamal Lewis, RB
Likely to see every goal line opportunity, but the downside is that there might not be many.

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Specialists The Browns have some of the most dependable special teamers in the league. Dave Zastudil had an outstanding season, averaging 44.0 yards per punt and 38.4 net. Phil Dawson started strong and struggled like every kicker with the cold weather K-balls, but he remains among the more dependable kickers in the league. Returner Joshua Cribbs had several big runs, including one for a touchdown against Pittsburgh. He will probably assume punt return duties following the departure of Dennis Northcutt to Jacksonville.

Coaching Staff Romeo Crennel survived a dismal season in 2006, but might not survive another one. His offensive coaching staff was revamped in the offseason, but in an odd twist Crennel did not do the revamping. The hiring and firing calls were made by Savage — though Crennel signed off on the moves. The key hire was to bring in Rob Chudzinski as offensive coordinator. Chudzinski will revamp the entire system and go to one that involves multiple formations and play-action. If nothing else, his play-calling should be an improvement over Maurice Carthon.

Wimbley: Joe Robbins/Getty Images; Lewis: Tim Clark/Getty Images

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
3	Anderson, Derek	QB	6'6"	229	2	Oregon State	W-Bal-05
11	Dorsey, Ken	QB	6'4"	211	4	Miami	T-SF-06
9	Frye, Charlie	QB	6'4"	218	2	Akron	D3-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
23	Barclay, Chris	RB	5'10"	180	1	Wake Forest	FA-06
35	Harrison, Jerome	RB	5'9"	199	1	Washington State	D5a-06
31	Lewis, Jamal	RB	5'11"	245	7	Tennessee	FA-Bal-07
47	Vickers, Lawrence	FB	6'0"	233	1	Colorado	D6a-06
29	Wright, Jason	RB	5'10"	210	2	Northwestern	FA-05
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
16	Cribbs, Joshua	WR	6'1"	192	2	Kent State	FA-05
87	Dinkins, Darnell	TE	6'4"	259	5	Pittsburgh	FA-Bal-06
17	Edwards, Braylon	WR	6'3"	212	2	Michigan	D1-05
82	Heiden, Steve	TE	6'5"	267	8	South Dakota St.	T-SD-02
84	Jurevicius, Joe	WR	6'5"	232	9	Penn State	FA-Sea-06
18	Mosley, Kendrick	WR	6'2"	207	1	Western Michigan	FA-06
85	Ortega, Buck	TE	6'4"	227	1	Miami	FA-06
81	Wilson, Travis	WR	6'1"	213	1	Oklahoma	D3-06
80	Winslow, Kellen	TE	6'4"	248	3	Miami	D1-04
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
57	Bentley, LeCharles	C	6'2"	309	5	Ohio State	FA-NO-06
71	Butler, Kelly	T	6'7"	330	3	Purdue	W-Det-06
60	Coleman, Cosey	G	6'4"	310	7	Tennessee	FA-TB-05
70	Dorsey, Nat	T	6'7"	345	3	Georgia Tech	T-Min-05
66	Fraley, Hank	C	6'2"	300	7	Robert Morris	T-Phi-06
62	Friedman, Lennie	G	6'3"	295	8	Duke	T-Chi-06
67	Matua, Fred	G	6'2"	307	1	USC	FA-06
68	McKinney, Seth	G/C	6'3"	310	5	Texas A&M	FA-Mia-07
77	Shaffer, Kevin	T	6'5"	320	5	Tulsa	FA-Atl-06
50	Smith, Rob	G	6'4"	306	1	Tennessee	FA-06
61	Sowells, Isaac	G	6'3"	324	1	Indiana	D4b-06
65	Steinbach, Eric	G	6'6"	290	4	Iowa	FA-Cin-07
72	Tucker, Ryan	T	6'6"	318	10	TCU	FA-StL-02
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
98	Eason, Nick	DL	6'3"	305	4	Clemson	FA-04
75	Fraser, Simon	DL	6'6"	295	2	Ohio State	FA-05
93	Harris, Orien	DL	6'3"	302	1	Miami	FA-06
78	Kelley, Ethan	DL	6'2"	320	2	Baylor	W-NE-05
96	Oshinowo, Babatunde	DL	6'1"	302	1	Stanford	D6b-06
69	Parker, J'Vonne	DL	6'4"	323	1	Rutgers	FA-06
56	Peek, Antwan	DE	6'3"	258	4	Cincinnati	FA-Cle-07
99	Roye, Orpheus	DL	6'4"	315	11	Florida State	FA-Pit-00
73	Smith, Alvin	DL	6'2"	307	1	Oregon State	FA-06
98	Smith, Robaire	DT	6'4"	314	7	Michigan State	FA-Ten-07
91	Smith, Shaun	DT	6'2"	325	3	South Carolina	FA-Cin-07
92	Washington, Ted	DL	6'5"	365	16	Louisville	FA-Oak-06
74	Winkler, Ulrich	DL	6'5"	258	1	No College	FA-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
54	Davis, Andra	LB	6'1"	254	5	Florida	D5-02
58	Jackson, D'Qwell	LB	6'0"	228	1	Maryland	D2-06
91	Keith, Charlton	LB	6'5"	225	1	Kansas	FA-06
55	McGinest, Willie	LB	6'5"	268	13	USC	FA-NE-06
90	McMillan, David	LB	6'3"	250	2	Kansas	D5-05
	Short, Jason	LB	6'4"	254	3	Eastern Michigan	FA-Phi-07
59	Smith, Clifton	LB	6'3"	253	2	Syracuse	FA-06
52	Stewart, Matt	LB	6'3"	236	6	Vanderbilt	FA-Atl-05
51	Thompson, Chaun	LB	6'2"	249	4	West Texas A&M	D2-03
53	Unck, Mason	LB	6'3"	238	3	Arizona State	FA-04
94	Williams, Leon	LB	6'2"	238	1	Miami	D4a-06
95	Wimbley, Kamerion	LB	6'3"	245	1	Florida State	D1-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
24	Baxter, Gary	CB	6'2"	210	6	Baylor	FA-Bal-05
28	Bodden, Leigh	CB	6'1"	192	4	Duquesne	FA-03
20	Brown, Ralph	CB	5'10"	185	7	Nebraska	FA-06
36	Emanuel, Ben	S	6'2"	220	2	UCLA	FA-06
38	Fontenot, Therrian	CB	5'10"	187	1	Fresno State	FA-06
25	Hamilton, Justin	S	6'3"	217	1	Virginia Tech	D7-06
39	Holly, Daven	DB	5'10"	192	2	Cincinnati	FA-06
26	Jones, Sean	SS	6'1"	215	3	Georgia	D2-04
23	LeSueur, Jeremy	S	6'0"	204	3	Michigan	FA-06
22	Minter, DeMario	CB	5'11"	190	1	Georgia	D5b-06
30	Perkins, Antonio	CB	5'11"	194	2	Oklahoma	FA-06
31	Perry, Jereme	CB	6'0"	190	1	Eastern Michigan	FA-06
21	Pool, Brodney	S	6'2"	208	2	Oklahoma	D2-05
25	Wright, Kenny	CB	6'1"	207	8	NW State	FA-Was-07
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
4	Dawson, Phil	K	5'11"	201	8	Texas	FA-99
64	Pontbriand, Ryan	LS	6'2"	250	4	Rice	D5a-03
15	Zastudil, Dave	P	6'3"	220	5	Ohio	FA-Bal-06

Head Coach: Romeo Crennel (10–22, 0–0 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Rob Chudzinski
Defensive Coordinator: Todd Grantham

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	84	Joe Jurevicius
WR	17	Braylon Edwards
LT	**73**	**Joe Thomas**
LG	**65**	**Eric Steinbach**
C	66	Hank Fraley
RG	**68**	**Seth McKinney**
RT	72	Ryan Tucker
TE	80	Kellen Winslow
QB	**10**	**Brady Quinn**
FB	47	Lawrence Vickers
RB	**31**	**Jamal Lewis**

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	**98**	**Robaire Smith**
NT	92	Ted Washington
DE	99	Orpheus Roye
OLB	95	Kamerion Wimbley
ILB	54	Andra Davis
ILB	58	D'Qwell Jackson
OLB	55	Willie McGinest
CB	28	Leigh Bodden
CB	**24**	**Eric Wright**
SS	26	Sean Jones
FS	21	Brodney Pool

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	4	Phil Dawson
P	15	Dave Zastudil

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	9	Charlie Frye
RB	35	Jerome Harrison
WR	16	Joshua Cribbs
TE	82	Steve Heiden
DL	**91**	**Shaun Smith**
LB	94	Leon Williams
CB	25	Kenny Wright

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Cleveland Browns Stadium (73,200) Surface: Grass
www.clevelandbrowns.com
Ticket Info: 888-891-1999
Training Camp: Browns Complex, Berea, Ohio

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key additions

RB	Jamal Lewis (Bal)
G	Seth McKinney (Mia)
LB	Antwan Peek (Hou)
DL	Robaire Smith (Ten)
DL	Shaun Smith (Cin)
G	Eric Steinbach (Cin)

Key losses

RB	Reuben Droughns (NYG)
CB	Daylon McCutcheon (FA)
DE	Alvin McKinley (Den)
WR	Dennis Northcutt (Jax)
S	Brian Russell (Sea)
FB	Terrelle Smith (Ari)

2007 Draft

1.	Joe Thomas	T	6'6"	313	Wisconsin
1.	Brady Quinn	QB	6'3"	226	Notre Dame
2.	Eric Wright	CB	5'11"	190	UNLV
5.	Brandon McDonald	CB	5'11"	181	Memphis
6.	Melila Purcell	DE	6'5"	289	Hawaii
7.	Chase Pittman	DE	6'5"	273	LSU
7.	Syndric Steptoe	WR	5'8"	194	Arizona

The Browns made a huge splash in the draft when they took Thomas and then managed to trade up out of the second round to get Quinn. That meant Cleveland had landed two players it had considered for the third overall pick. Cleveland absolutely needed to sign a fair-to-middling lineman in free agency, and they landed the best one in Steinbach. He'll step in at guard, a weak position last season. McKinney is a player that Phil Savage likes, but he's coming off neck surgery. If he's healthy, he could be the other starter at guard. Lewis' arrival from Baltimore was a surprise. He signed a one-year deal, which may help the Browns. But he won't be any improvement over Droughns if he's not better than he showed the last two years in Baltimore. The addition of the two Smiths on the defensive line was another necessity as the Browns continue to find the right people to play the 3-4 defense.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Charlie Frye	392	252	2,454	10	17
Derek Anderson	117	66	793	5	8
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Reuben Droughns*	220	758	3.4	4	
Charlie Frye	47	215	4.6	3	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Braylon Edwards	61	884	14.5	6	
Kellen Winslow	89	875	9.8	3	
Joe Jurevicius	40	495	12.4	3	

Kicking: Phil Dawson, 21-29 FGs, 25-25 XPs, 88 points
Tackles: Sean Jones, 111; Andra Davis, 104
Sacks: Kamerion Wimbley, 11
Interceptions: Daven Holly, 5; Sean Jones, 5
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (4–12)

Sept.	10	New Orleans	L	14–19
Sept.	17	at Cincinnati	L	17–34
Sept.	24	Baltimore	L	14–15
Oct.	1	at Oakland	W	24–21
Oct.	8	at Carolina	L	12–20
Oct.	22	Denver	L	7–17
Oct.	29	N.Y. Jets	W	20–13
Nov.	5	at San Diego	L	25–32
Nov.	12	at Atlanta	W	17–13
Nov.	19	Pittsburgh	L	20–24
Nov.	26	Cincinnati	L	0–30
Dec.	3	Kansas City (OT)	W	31–28
Dec.	7	at Pittsburgh	L	7–27
Dec.	17	at Baltimore	L	17–27
Dec.	24	Tampa Bay	L	7–22
Dec.	31	at Houston	L	6–14

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	264.6	31	-57.5
Rushing	83.4	31	-33.9
Passing	181.1	23	-23.7
Scoring	14.9	30	-5.8
Punt Returns	10.3	7	+1.6
Kick Returns	23.0	13	+0.5
Red Zone TD %	48.7	17	-2.1
Defense			
Total Defense	344.8	27	+22.7
Against Rush	142.2	29	+24.9
Against Pass	202.6	15	-2.2
Points Allowed	22.2	22	+1.5
Interceptions	18	10T	+1.7
Sacks	28	27T	-8.3
Turnover Diff.	-15	31	-

STEELERS

It's transition time for the Super Bowl XL champs, who still feel the fallout from their failed attempt to repeat for the third time in their history. Coach Bill Cowher quit after 15 years, and linebacker Joey Porter, in many ways the face of the ferocious defense, was jettisoned.

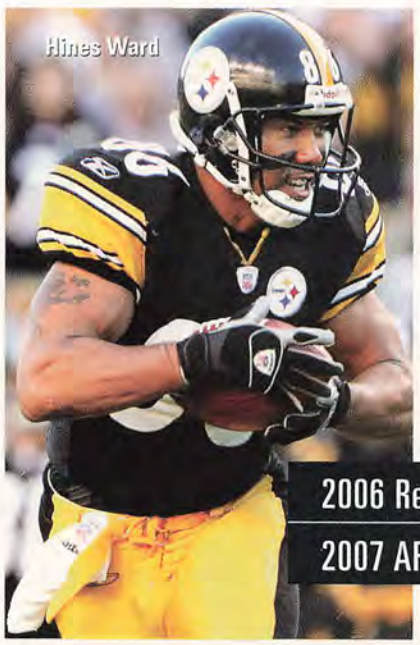
New coach Mike Tomlin, a proponent of the Tampa 2 defense, says he wants to be aggressive and wants to stick with the 3-4 defense the Steelers have run for a quarter of a century. "If you study my background, I like a little 3-4 anyway," says Tomlin, 35. "I know what it does to offenses, I really do. It's all about the personnel you have. We have the best 3-4 people in the world, I think. That's what we're going to do."

Tomlin sounds like his predecessor. He wants a team built around the run that plays tough defense. "There's no secret in the National Football League, in order to win you have to stop the run and you have to run the ball effectively. To be general, that's what our football team will be about."

Aside from Porter, Tomlin has most of the ingredients back that forged the Steelers' fifth Super Bowl victory. So while most new coaches find the cupboard bare, Tomlin has a good nucleus with his first team.

Quarterbacks If the Steelers are to improve, the inspiration won't necessarily come from a new head coach but from the old Ben Roethlisberger. They need the Big Ben of 2004 and 2005, not the imposter whose 23 interceptions last season led the NFL (compared to 18 TD passes) and played a key role in several of the Steelers' eight losses. He had a 75.4 passer rating and a 7–8 record in his third year as a starter. He was 27–4 in his first two seasons, counting playoffs, with a 98.3 overall passer rating. Instead of taking pressure off him, the new staff will add to it. New offensive coordinator Bruce Arians has altered the language in the playbook, will switch the protection calls from the line to his quarterback and wants to open with four wide receivers on occasion. "It's going to be tough, it's going to take a lot of learning," Roethlisberger says. "(They're) letting me call a lot more of the stuff at the line." Veteran Charlie Batch, who won the opener against Miami last year with Roethlisberger out, provides a steady hand behind him if they need it.

Running Backs Willie Parker used his second season as a starter to prove his first was no fluke. Parker showed that a fast, quick back also can be durable. He carried more of the load in 2006 with 1,494 yards — third-most ever by a Steeler — on 337 carries. They would like to reduce that load this season for a couple of reasons: to save him and to take advantage of another back and a different style. "I think that's just part of today's NFL," Tomlin says. "If we're going to be part of that mix, I think we should do the same." The Steelers moved quickly to re-sign Najeh Davenport, and in mid-May they signed veteran Kevan Barlow, a former star at Pitt who was released by the Jets. Verron Haynes, had ACL surgery in November. Fullback Dan Kreider rarely touches the ball; his forte is as the lead blocker for the others.


Hines Ward

Receivers Arians, promoted to coordinator after coaching the receivers, wants to deploy formations on first and second downs with four wideouts more often. That does not mean he wants to pass more often. "You don't have to line up with two tight ends and two backs to run the football," Arians says. The starters are four-time Pro Bowler Hines Ward and second-year man Santonio Holmes, the leading rookie receiver in the AFC with 49 receptions and a starter by the end of the year. Cedrick Wilson and Nate Washington would join them when they go to four. The position is adequate but not one that can take over a game on a consistent basis. Third-year pro Heath Miller, a 6'5" target, will be joined in a two-tight end set by 6'7" rookie Matt Spaeth from Minnesota

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE STEELERS

A new, young coach may be just what the Pittsburgh Steelers needed after their 8–8 Super Bowl hangover. Although having lost little talent from their Super Bowl XL champs, many believed the Steelers became lethargic and no longer had the kind of hunger in 2006 that propelled them to the top of the NFL the previous season. Mike Tomlin's inexperience may show, but he still has enough talent on the team to make a playoff run the Steelers never mounted last season when they started 2–6. His most important job is to get quarterback Ben Roethlisberger back on his 2004-05 track. His second-biggest job will be to generate a pass rush, replacing Joey Porter with someone who can put the heat on the quarterback. The Steelers have done that more with their ends than outside linebackers, and a 3-4 defense should get more pressure from the outside. Pittsburgh's secondary is in a state of flux, but it's not without talent, and that's where Tomlin cut his teeth in his first five years as an NFL assistant. Unlike most new coaches, Tomlin takes over a good team less than a year and a half after winning a Super Bowl and a team that won six of its final eight games. In the two seasons before they slipped to 8–8, the Steelers compiled a 26–6 record. They kept that team intact, one reason why last season was so discouraging.

2006 Record: 8–8

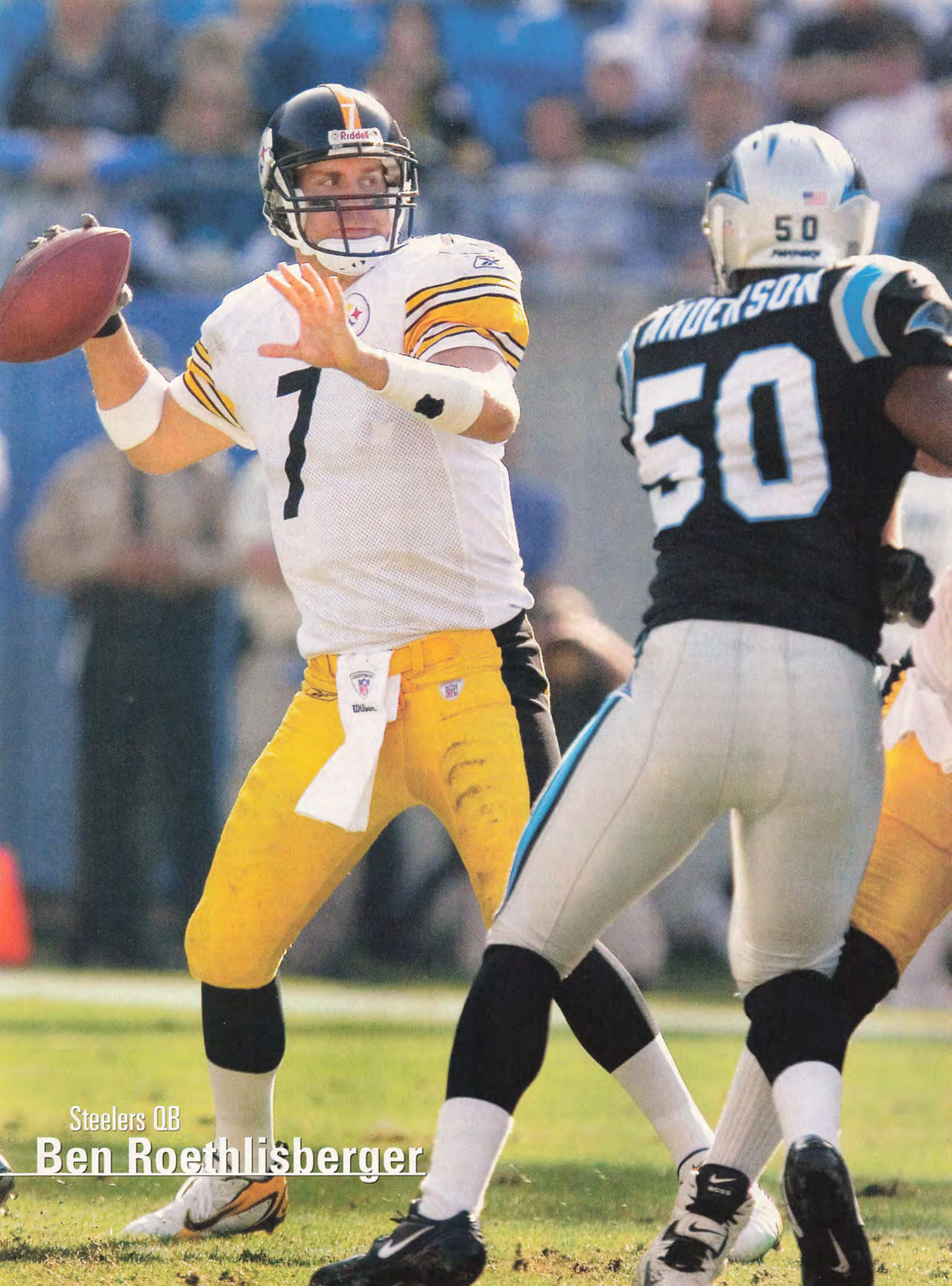
2007 AFC North Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Cleveland	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	Buffalo	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	San Francisco	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at Arizona	4:15 pm
Oct.	7	Seattle	1:00 pm
Week	6	BYE	
Oct.	21	at Denver	8:15 pm
Oct.	28	at Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Nov.	5	Baltimore	8:30 pm
Nov.	11	Cleveland	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at N.Y. Jets	1:00 pm
Nov.	26	Miami	8:30 pm
Dec.	2	Cincinnati	8:15 pm
Dec.	9	at New England	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Dec.	20	at St. Louis	8:15 pm
Dec.	30	at Baltimore	1:00 pm

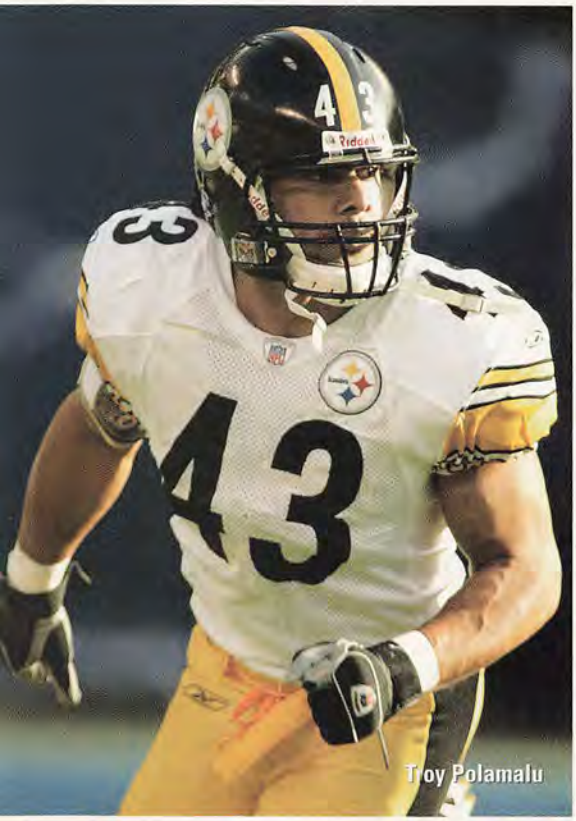
All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Ward: Jason Bridge/US Presswire
Roethlisberger: Bob Donnan/US Presswire



Steelers QB

Ben Roethlisberger


Troy Polamalu

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Small Ben Ben Roethlisberger says he will play at the 240-pound range he played last season, down 15-20 from his second season. "I loved the shape I was in last year," he says.

One of the best Since the merger, Pittsburgh has the second-best record in the NFL at 341–225–2 (.602). Only Miami's .626 is better.

Don't go there The Steelers defense has allowed only one runner to reach 100 yards rushing in its past 44 games — Edgerrin James of Indianapolis, who ran for 124 yards in week 12 of 2005.

Two for 200 Willie Parker's 223 yards against Cleveland last season set a Steelers record. His 213 against New Orleans made him the only Steeler to post two 200-yard games in a season or a career.

City boy Mike Tomlin is the first Steelers coach in more than 50 years who will actually live within the city of Pittsburgh after he bought a house there. Walt Kiseling, who last coached the team in 1956, was the last one to pay Pittsburgh taxes, according to Dan Rooney.

Help's on its way Rookie Lawrence Timmons became only the third linebacker in Steelers history drafted in the first round, and the Steelers drafted linebackers 1-2 for the first time ever.

Offensive Linemen The Steelers have marked the passing of eras by the retirements of their centers. They'll record another after two-time Pro Bowler Jeff Hartings followed Dermontti Dawson and Mike Webster into retirement — their three starters the past 30 years. Sean Mahan is next up after he signed a five-year, $17 million contract to leave Tampa Bay as a free agent. The rest of the line should be familiar, although Tomlin will hold open competition at right guard and tackle. The left side is set with tackle Marvel Smith and six-time Pro Bowl guard Alan Faneca, who enters the final year of his contract. On the right, guard Kendall Simmons must hold off young Chris Kemoeatu, and two-year starter Max Starks will contend with second-year pro Willie Colon at tackle. What becomes of veteran backup center Chukky Okobi will be interesting. Simmons was supposed to compete with Mahan and Okobi at center, but if Simmons proves capable, he'll become the game-day emergency backup to Mahan, possibly making Okobi expendable.

Defensive Linemen Tomlin believes he has the perfect linemen for the 3-4. Aaron Smith is a stout defensive end who could play tackle in a four-man line but is suited much more to his spot on the strong side. Pro Bowl nose tackle Casey Hampton may be the MVP of that defense, a 335-pound cork who plugs everything in the middle and also can collapse a center right into the pocket. Right end Brett Keisel is the best pass rusher of the three and could easily become a four-man end on the weak side if the Steelers ever evolve into the 4-3. The problem is the lack of young players as backups, something the draft has failed to provide. Chris Hoke has played well as Hampton's backup, but an injury to either end would be devastating.

Linebackers The long-standing strength of a Steelers defense has slipped, and it took another blow with the release of three-time Pro Bowler Porter. It will be the first time this century the Steelers will start a season without a Pro Bowl résumé at outside linebacker. James Harrison, a strong backup the past three years, might do fine as Porter's replacement. Nevertheless, the Steelers flooded the outside with their first two draft picks — Lawrence Timmons and LaMarr Woodley. Clark Haggans has blown hot and cold as a two-year starter on the left side. Inside is more comforting with James Farrior and Larry Foote and adequate backups. Timmons also could be used there.

Defensive Backs The secondary will be in transition. Safety Troy Polamalu won't have to worry about getting lost deep in any cover 2 schemes, because Tomlin wants to take advantage of his versatility and aggressiveness. Anthony Smith may unseat Ryan Clark at free safety after a strong rookie season in which he started the final four games. Cornerback is more of a mystery. The new staff must ask the real Ike Taylor to stand up. Is he the one the Steelers signed to a large contract extension last summer, or the one who was benched by Thanksgiving? Bryant McFadden likely will be the other starter with veteran Deshea Townsend stepping up if Taylor again cannot handle the chores.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Willie Parker, RB
Plays in an offense that has generated 34 rushing touchdowns over the last two seasons.

Hines Ward, WR
The emergence of a strong No. 2 wide receiver in Pittsburgh would help take away some of the defensive pressure.

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Specialists Jeff Reed made only 20-of-27 field goals for an underachieving .741 percentage last season, but he's had too many good ones for the new coaches to worry about it (all of his misses came at home). The Steelers drafted punter Daniel Sepulveda in the fourth round to replace veteran Chris Gardocki. Sepulveda averaged 46.5 yards per punt at Baylor last season and does it with good hang time. Second-year wide receivers Holmes and Willie Reid are the top candidates to return punts and kickoffs.

Coaching Staff Tomlin served one year as defensive coordinator in Minnesota after coaching the secondary in Tampa Bay since 2001. It was there that Tony Dungy tutored him in his cover 2 defense that traced its roots in the 1970s to Pittsburgh. None of Tomlin's new staff has ever worked with him in the pros. Tomlin pulled a bit of surprise when he kept defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau and most of his staff. LeBeau has been a proponent of the 3-4 zone blitz and will stay with that this year. "I think sometimes Xs and Os are overrated," Tomlin says. "It's about us putting our guys in position to play well." Arians, promoted to replace Ken Whisenhunt as offensive coordinator, streamlined a playbook adjusted through the past 15 years by six different coordinators. Roethlisberger has a new quarterbacks coach in Ken Anderson.

Polamalu: Stan Liu/US Presswire; Parker: Brad Schloss

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
16	Batch, Charlie	QB	6'2"	216	9	Eastern Michigan	FA-02
7	Roethlisberger, Ben	QB	6'5"	241	3	Miami (Ohio)	D1-04
2	St. Pierre, Brian	QB	6'3"	230	4	Boston College	FA-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
32	Barlow, Kevan	RB	6'1"	234	6	Pittsburgh	FA-NYJ-07
44	Davenport, Najeh	RB	6'1"	247	5	Miami	FA-06
38	Davis, Carey	FB	5'10"	225	1	Illinois	FA-06
35	Kreider, Dan	FB	5'11"	255	7	New Hampshire	FA-00
42	Kuhn, John	RB	6'0"	255	1	Shippensburg	FA-05
39	Parker, Willie	RB	5'10"	209	3	North Carolina	FA-04
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
88	Dekker, Jon	TE	6'5"	250	1	Princeton	FA-06
10	Holmes, Santonio	WR	5'11"	189	1	Ohio State	D1-06
83	Miller, Heath	TE	6'5"	256	2	Virginia	D1-05
15	Reid, Willie	WR	5'10"	186	1	Florida State	D3b-06
84	Tuman, Jerame	TE	6'4"	253	8	Michigan	D5-99
86	Ward, Hines	WR	6'0"	205	9	Georgia	D3b-98
85	Washington, Nate	WR	6'1"	185	2	Tiffin	FA-05
80	Wilson, Cedrick	WR	5'10"	183	6	Tennessee	FA-SF-05
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
69	Booker, Ulish	T	6'6"	319	1	Michigan State	FA-05
72	Brooks, Barrett	T	6'5"	325	12	Kansas State	FA-03
74	Colon, Willie	T	6'3"	315	1	Hofstra	D4a-06
79	Essex, Trai	T	6'4"	324	2	Northwestern	D3-05
66	Faneca, Alan	G	6'5"	307	9	LSU	D1-98
68	Kemoeatu, Chris	G	6'3"	344	2	Utah	D6-05
61	Mahan, Sean	G/C	6'3"	301	4	Notre Dame	FA-TB-07
56	Okobi, Chukky	C	6'1"	305	6	Purdue	D5-01
62	Philip, Marvin	C	6'1"	307	1	California	D6-06
73	Simmons, Kendall	G	6'3"	315	5	Auburn	D1-02
77	Smith, Marvel	T	6'5"	321	7	Arizona State	D2-00
78	Starks, Max	T	6'8"	337	3	Florida	D3-04
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
98	Hampton, Casey	DT	6'1"	335	6	Texas	D1-01
76	Hoke, Chris	DT	6'2"	305	6	BYU	FA-02
99	Keisel, Brett	DE	6'5"	285	5	BYU	D7b-02
90	Kirschke, Travis	DE	6'3"	298	10	UCLA	FA-SF-04
96	Nua, Shaun	DE	6'5"	280	2	BYU	D7a-05
74	Paxson, Scott	DT	6'4"	292	1	Penn State	FA-06
91	Smith, Aaron	DE	6'5"	298	8	Northern Colorado	D4-99
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
94	Brown, Chad	LB	6'2"	245	14	Colorado	FA-06
51	Farrior, James	LB	6'2"	243	10	Virginia	FA-NYJ-02
50	Foote, Larry	LB	6'1"	239	5	Michigan	D4-02
53	Haggans, Clark	LB	6'4"	243	7	Colorado State	D5a-00
97	Harrison, Arnold	LB	6'3"	241	1	Georgia	FA-05
92	Harrison, James	LB	6'0"	242	3	Kent State	FA-04
57	Kriewaldt, Clint	LB	6'1"	248	8	Wisc.-Stevens Pt.	FA-Det-03
47	Stanley, Ron	LB	6'0"	244	1	Michigan State	FA-06
54	Wallace, Rian	LB	6'3"	243	2	Temple	D5-05
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
23	Carter, Tyrone	S	5'9"	195	7	Minnesota	FA-04
25	Clark, Ryan	S	5'11"	205	5	LSU	FA-Was-06
21	Colclough, Ricardo	CB	5'11"	195	3	Tusculum	D2-04
29	Iwuoma, Chidi	S	5'9"	184	6	California	FA-06
28	Johnson, Jovon	CB	5'9"	177	1	Iowa	FA-06
45	Lorello, Mike	S	5'11"	208	1	West Virginia	FA-06
37	Madison, Anthony	CB	5'9"	180	1	Alabama	FA-06
20	McFadden, Bryant	CB	6'0"	190	2	Florida State	D2-05
43	Polamalu, Troy	S	5'10"	207	4	USC	D1-03
27	Smith, Anthony	S	5'11"	192	1	Syracuse	D3a-06
24	Taylor, Ike	CB	6'1"	191	4	UL Lafayette	D4-03
26	Townsend, Deshea	CB	5'10"	190	9	Alabama	D4a-98
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
3	Reed, Jeff	K	5'11"	225	5	North Carolina	FA-02
60	Warren, Greg	LS	6'3"	252	2	North Carolina	FA-05

Head Coach: Mike Tomlin (first season)
Offensive Coordinator: Bruce Arians
Defensive Coordinator: Dick LeBeau

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	10	Santonio Holmes
WR	86	Hines Ward
LT	77	Marvel Smith
LG	66	Alan Faneca
C	**61**	**Sean Mahan**
RG	73	Kendall Simmons
RT	78	Max Starks
TE	83	Heath Miller
QB	7	Ben Roethlisberger
FB	35	Dan Kreider
HB	39	Willie Parker

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	91	Aaron Smith
NT	98	Casey Hampton
DE	99	Brett Keisel
OLB	53	Clark Haggans
ILB	51	James Farrior
ILB	50	Larry Foote
OLB	92	James Harrison
CB	24	Ike Taylor
CB	20	Bryant McFadden
SS	43	Troy Polamalu
FS	27	Anthony Smith

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	3	Jeff Reed
P	**9**	**Daniel Sepulveda**

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	16	Charlie Batch
RB	44	Najeh Davenport
WR	80	Cedrick Wilson
CB	26	Deshea Townsend
S	25	Ryan Clark

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Heinz Field (65, 075)
Surface: Grass
www.steelers.com
Ticket Info: 412-323-1200
Training Camp: St. Vincent College (Latrobe, PA)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Addition

C/G Sean Mahan (TB)

Key Losses

C Jeff Hartings (Retired)
P Chris Gardocki (FA)
LB Joey Porter (Mia)

2007 Draft

1.	Lawrence Timmons	OLB	6'3"	232	Florida State
2.	LaMarr Woodley	DE/OLB	6'2"	269	Michigan
3.	Matt Spaeth	TE	6'7"	267	Minnesota
4.	Daniel Sepulveda	P	6'3"	229	Baylor
4.	Ryan McBean	DE	6'5"	290	Oklahoma State
5.	Cameron Stephenson	G	6'3"	306	Rutgers
5.	William Gay	CB	5'10"	187	Louisville
7.	Dallas Baker	WR	6'3"	207	Florida

Mahan was signed from Tampa Bay, where he started at guard and center, to replace Hartings at center. It's possible Mahan could play guard, where he started two seasons for the Bucs. The Steelers released Porter rather than pay him $5 million this year, which caused veteran receiver Hines Ward to complain publicly, especially after Porter got $20 million in bonuses from Miami. The team then moved to replenish its outside linebackers by drafting Timmons and Woodley in the first two rounds. Woodley may see more playing time as a rookie than Timmons, because the coaches plan to use him as a pass rusher on third downs to spell their starters at outside linebacker who normally hold those roles. Timmons also could be tried there on occasion. Gardocki's average tumbled and he turned 37, so the Steelers drafted Sepulveda to take his place. Spaeth could quickly become their No. 2 tight end.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Ben Roethlisberger	469	280	3,513	18	23
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Willie Parker	337	1,494	4.4		13
Najeh Davenport	60	221	3.7		1
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Hines Ward	74	975	13.2		6
Santonio Holmes	49	824	16.8		2
Cedrick Wilson	37	504	13.6		1
Nate Washington	35	624	17.8		4

Kicking: Jeff Reed, 20-27 FGs, 41-41 XPs, 101 points
Tackles: James Farrior, 126; Larry Foote, 90
Sacks: Joey Porter*, 7
Interceptions: Bryant McFadden, 3; Troy Polamalu, 3
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	7	Miami	W	28–17
Sept.	18	at Jacksonville	L	0– 9
Sept.	24	Cincinnati	L	20–28
Oct.	8	at San Diego	L	13–23
Oct.	15	Kansas City	W	45– 7
Oct.	22	at Atlanta (OT)	L	38–41
Oct.	29	at Oakland	L	13–20
Nov.	5	Denver	L	20–31
Nov.	12	New Orleans	W	38–31
Nov.	19	at Cleveland	W	24–20
Nov.	26	at Baltimore	L	0–27
Dec.	3	Tampa Bay	W	20– 3
Dec.	7	Cleveland	W	27– 7
Dec.	17	at Carolina	W	37– 3
Dec.	24	Baltimore	L	7–31
Dec.	31	at Cincinnati (OT)	W	23–17

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	357.8	7	+35.7
Rushing	124.5	10	+7.2
Passing	233.3	9	+28.5
Scoring	22.1	12T	+1.4
Punt Returns	8.4	19	-0.3
Kick Returns	22.1	21	-0.4
Red Zone TD %	50.0	15T	-0.8
Defense			
Total Defense	300.3	9	-21.8
Against Rush	88.3	3	-29.0
Against Pass	212.1	20	+7.3
Points Allowed	19.7	11T	-1.0
Interceptions	20	6T	+3.7
Sacks	39	11	+2.7
Turnover Diff.	-8	27T	-

TEXANS

The Texans are trying to separate themselves from a past plagued with disappointment and losing. They began the process last year by changing the coaching staff and introducing a new approach on the field and a new attitude in the locker room.

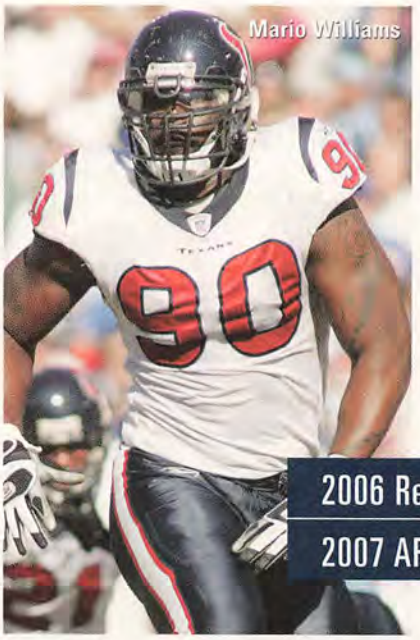
This offseason, they took another major step by releasing quarterback David Carr, the franchise's first-ever draft pick, and running back Domanick Williams, whose knee may never allow him to play again.

Now, the Texans are counting on quarterback Matt Schaub and running back Ahman Green to help lead the franchise into a new era. If Green stays healthy and Schaub emerges as the leader the Texans have lacked on offense, the club could flirt with a winning record.

Quarterbacks Schaub takes over the reins from Carr and is expected to emerge as an instant leader. The Texans plan to build around his strengths, which include pocket presence and ability to get rid of the ball. "Our offense is built on a lot of movement, and we're still going to do that because we think he can do it, but if I listed his strengths, running isn't No. 1," coach Gary Kubiak says. "His pocket presence, his savvy, his smarts would be at the top. There's going to be a little adjustment on our part, but that's part of it." Sage Rosenfels will remain the backup. When he steps on the field, he looks like a quarterback made to run this offense.

Running Backs The Texans have a stable of running backs. Unlike last year, they even have a proven starter in Green, who they expect to march toward his seventh 1,000-yard season. He is a power runner, expected to succeed in the Texans' zone-blocking scheme. Green will get the majority of the carries, but Ron Dayne will also receive plenty of work. He was solid in the final month last season, especially in the victory over the Colts when he rushed for 153 yards. Wali Lundy, Chris Taylor and Samkon Gado will be in a fierce competition for the other roster spot. Vonta Leach joined the Texans midway through last season and quickly emerged as the starter at fullback. He was the primary blocker in December and helped the Texans boost their average rushing yards per game from 96.2 to 125.2. "There was no doubt that he came in late last year and not only won the job but showed he could be the future at the position," Kubiak says.

Receivers Andre Johnson returns from another trip to the Pro Bowl. The Texans want to make that an annual trek for him, but it won't work unless they find him a sidekick capable of distracting defenses. Kevin Walter hopes to be the answer. He will start opposite Johnson. Kubiak likes the potential of Walter, who has only 47 career receptions — 17 of which came last year. Rookie Jacoby Jones will also challenge for playing time, along with Charlie Adams, Jerome Mathis, David Anderson and Andre' Davis. "We have one of the best players in football in Andre Johnson, and we need some guys to go with him," Kubiak says. "I really like Kevin Walter. I should have played him more because he reminds me of a young Ed McCaffrey. I want to give him every opportunity to win that starting job opposite Andre." Owen Daniels returns as the starting, dual-threat tight end. Mark Bruener proved to be a solid target last year and will be used primarily in short yardage and blocking situations. Jeb Putzier, who has good hands, will be used in longer yardage situations.


Mario Williams

Offensive Linemen Despite concern that Charles Spencer will not be healthy by the season opener, the Texans did not use a high draft pick for a young left tackle. Instead, they'll likely start veteran Jordan Black and use Ephraim Salaam as a reliable reserve. The offensive line, as a whole, looks quite familiar. Right tackle Zach Wiegert was released, leaving way for Eric Winston to

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE TEXANS

The Texans have new faces throughout their roster, but will they be able to produce new results? Whether or not the victories mount, it will be the most intriguing season ever for the franchise. The storylines abound throughout the schedule with two games against Vince Young, one game against Reggie Bush, a face-off between Matt Schaub and Michael Vick in Atlanta and a primetime game in December against the Denver Broncos, which will undoubtedly be emotional for Gary Kubiak. The pressure is on Schaub and running back Ahman Green to help lift the franchise to some memorable victories — and its first winning season. The offense will build around its running game, helping alleviate pressure for Schaub, who will not be expected to win games by himself. The Texans enter the season with two major questions. Who will protect Schaub's blindside? And who will start opposite Andre Johnson? On defense, they must start seeing results on a defensive line that boasts four first-round draft picks in Amobi Okoye, Mario Williams, Travis Johnson and Jason Babin. If they cannot get pressure on the quarterback this season, it will be hard for the Texans to win. However, if the defensive line improves its pass rush and Green is able to stay healthy, the Texans could prove that they are finally on the upswing. A .500 season isn't out of the question.

2006 Record: 6–10

2007 AFC South Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Kansas City	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	at Carolina	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	Indianapolis	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at Atlanta	1:00 pm
Oct.	7	Miami	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	Tennessee	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	at San Diego	4:05 pm
Nov.	4	at Oakland	4:15 pm
Week	10	BYE	
Nov.	18	New Orleans	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	at Cleveland	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Tennessee	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Dec.	13	Denver	8:15 pm
Dec.	23	at Indianapolis	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	Jacksonville	1:00pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Williams: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports
Johnson: Karl Wright/US Presswire

Texans WR

Andre Johnson

DeMeco Ryans

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Short-term memory After giving up an average of 483.7 yards per game in the first three games of last season, the defense was one of the best in the league over the last three months, allowing almost 180 fewer yards per game in that time span. The defense ranked 24th in the league in total yards per game allowed, but since the beginning of October, Houston was 10th in that category.

Young gun All eyes will be on the Texans' top draft pick, Amobi Okoye. On opening day, he will enter the record books as the youngest NFL player since 1967. He will be 20 years and 91 days old.

Line 'em up The Texans have used their last four first-round draft selections on defensive linemen: DT Okoye (2007), DE Mario Williams (2006), DT Travis Johnson (2005) and DE Jason Babin (2004).

Still going strong The Texans are well aware that Ahman Green is already 30 years old, but they don't see why that will keep him from posting his seventh 1,000-yard season. After studying some of the NFL's best backs — Tiki Barber, Warrick Dunn, Curtis Martin, Fred Taylor and Corey Dillon — they feel plenty of success can come after 30.

retain the job he took over when Wiegert was sidelined with a knee injury. Chester Pitts and Fred Weary remain at guard, while Steve McKinney will likely factor into that rotation. McKinney may also make a push to get back his starting job at center. Mike Flanagan and Drew Hodgdon struggled at times last year, and McKinney was under center for the Texans' final two games — both victories.

Defensive Linemen This is where much of the team's money and expectations are tied. The Texans want the pass rush to finally be effective. The addition of Amobi Okoye should help. The team has lacked an aggressive, quick, pass-rush threat inside. If he is productive, he will divert attention away from Mario Williams, freeing Williams up to make plays of his own. "When you've got an end on your team, people can turn their protections a certain way to try to help and double on that player if you only have that player," Kubiak says. "By having an inside guy to go with him to rush the passer, it will definitely level the playing field. It just makes the whole defense better." With Okoye starting, Travis Johnson and Anthony Maddox will be in an competition for the other starting job. It's likely that the players will fit into a rotation, similar to last season when eight players constantly rotated in and out of the line to stay fresh. At end, Williams and Anthony Weaver will start. Jason Babin will come off the bench as a situational pass rusher. N.D. Kalu, Jeff Zgonina and Thomas Johnson will be the top reserves.

Linebackers The Texans return all of their starters from a year ago, including DeMeco Ryans, the defensive Rookie of the Year. A big focus of free agency was strengthening the depth at linebacker and making the unit faster. Danny Clark and Shawn Barber both joined the mix and will likely compete for one of the starting jobs on the outside. Morlon Greenwood started slowly last season but ended up compiling one of his best seasons in the NFL. Shantee Orr struggled to adjust to the 4-3 but played better as the season wore on. Ryans will be the unquestioned leader of the unit. He surprised many with an outstanding rookie season that included leading the entire league in solo tackles. Linebackers coach Johnny Holland has done an outstanding job with this group, and they should show even more improvement this season.

Defensive Backs The Texans hope for big plays as they return all four starters from a year ago. In three of the last five seasons, Houston has ranked in the league's bottom five in interceptions. If the defensive line is successful with its pass-rush this season, game-changing plays in the secondary should increase. Dunta Robinson and Demarcus Faggins will start at cornerback. C.C. Brown and Glenn Earl will start at free safety and strong safety, respectively. The Texans still lack a true free safety, which hurts them when trying to chase down running backs in the open field. But Brown and Earl are still young and improving. Free agent Jamar Fletcher will compete with rookie Fred Bennett to replace nickel back Lewis Sanders.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Ahman Green, RB
The backfield is a little crowded with Ron Dayne and Wali Lundy, but Green is the best fit in the Texans' zone-blocking scheme.

Owen Daniels, TE
An excellent receiver who could become a favorite target for new QB Matt Schaub.

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Specialists Everyone returns despite some ups and downs in virtually every area last season. Kris Brown missed 4-of-8 field goals in November but seemed to straighten out the problems in December. Punter Chad Stanley booted a career-high 41.6 yards per kick, though he downed only 15 of 76 inside the 20. Long-snapper Bryan Pittman is as good as it gets. The Texans hope they've improved the return game with the addition of Jones, a third-round draft pick. "That was part of the pick, the fact that he has a return ability added to his value at that position," Kubiak says. Mathis, a former All-Pro returner, is back but must prove he can stay on the field and contribute or he will lose his job. Dexter Wynn stepped in and was solid on punts and kickoffs. He will likely return punts again.

Coaching Staff When Troy Calhoun announced he was becoming the head coach at Air Force, Kubiak didn't look far for his replacement. He promoted Mike Sherman to assistant head coach/offensive coordinator. Little will change with the team, however. The offense will remain basically the same with Kubiak calling most of the shots. A few changes were made among position coaches, with the biggest one being on defense. Jethro Franklin will coach the defensive line, and Frank Bush, the senior defensive assistant, will help. They will focus especially on developing Williams and Okoye.

Ryans: Rich Kane/US Presswire; Green: Larry Kinker

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
5	Porter, Quinton	QB	6'5"	228	1	Boston College	FA-06
18	Rosenfels, Sage	QB	6'2"	224	6	Iowa State	FA-Mia-06
8	Schaub, Matt	QB	6'5"	237	3	Virginia	T-Atl-07
10	Van Pelt, Bradlee	QB	6'2"	220	2	Colorado State	FA-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
43	Cook, Jameel	FB	5'10"	237	6	Illinois	FA-TB-06
36	Dayne, Ron	RB	5'10"	245	7	Wisconsin	FA-06
35	Gado, Samkon	RB	5'10"	226	2	Liberty	T-GB-06
30	Green, Ahman	RB	6'0"	218	9	Nebraska	FA-GB-07
44	Leach, Vonta	FB	6'0"	250	3	East Carolina	FA-06
33	Lundy, Wali	RB	5'10"	211	1	Virginia	D6-06
27	Taylor, Chris	RB	6'0"	224	1	Indiana	FA-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
19	Adams, Charlie	WR	6'2"	190	4	Hofstra	FA-07
14	Anderson, David	WR	5'10"	197	1	Colorado State	D7-06
87	Bruener, Mark	TE	6'4"	256	12	Washington	FA-Pit-04
81	Daniels, Owen	TE	6'3"	246	1	Wisconsin	D4-06
11	Davis, Andre'	WR	6'1"	195	5	Virginia Tech	FA-Buf-07
80	Johnson, Andre	WR	6'3"	222	4	Miami	D1-03
13	Mathis, Jerome	WR	5'11"	184	2	Hampton	D4-05
88	Putzier, Jeb	TE	6'4"	251	5	Boise State	FA-Den-06
82	Steele, Ben	TE	6'5"	245	3	Mesa College	FA-06
85	Walter, Kevin	WR	6'3"	215	4	Eastern Michigan	FA-Cin-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
68	Bedell, Brad	T	6'4"	307	5	Colorado	FA-06
65	Black, Jordan	T	6'5"	310	4	Notre Dame	FA-KC-07
58	Flanagan, Mike	C	6'5"	303	11	UCLA	FA-GB-06
57	Hodgdon, Drew	C	6'3"	291	2	Arizona State	D5-05
76	McKinney, Steve	G	6'4"	305	9	Texas A&M	FA-Ind-02
69	Pitts, Chester	G	6'4"	322	5	San Diego State	D2-02
74	Salaam, Ephraim	T	6'7"	302	9	San Diego State	FA-Jac-06
77	Spencer, Charles	T	6'4"	337	1	Pittsburgh	D3a-06
70	Weary, Fred	G	6'4"	307	5	Tennessee	D3a-02
73	Winston, Eric	T	6'5"	307	1	Miami	D3b-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
93	Babin, Jason	DE	6'2"	267	3	Western Michigan	D1b-04
79	Bulman, Tim	DT	6'4"	292	2	Boston College	FA-06
60	Cochran, Earl	DE	6'5"	272	2	Alabama State	FA-06
75	Dalton, Lional	DT	6'1"	315	9	Eastern Michigan	FA-06
96	Johnson, Thomas	DT	6'2"	302	2	Middle Tennessee	FA-06
99	Johnson, Travis	DT	6'3"	315	2	Florida State	D1-05
94	Kalu, N.D.	DE	6'3"	265	10	Rice	FA-Phi-06
78	Killings, Cedric	DT	6'3"	310	4	Carson-Newman	FA-06
95	Maddox, Anthony	DT	6'1"	295	3	Delta State	FA-06
97	Malone, Alfred	DT	6'5"	308	1	Troy	FA-05
92	Weaver, Anthony	DE	6'3"	286	5	Notre Dame	FA-Bal-06
90	Williams, Mario	DE	6'6"	293	1	NC State	D1-06
	Zgonina, Jeff	DT	6'2"	290	14	Purdue	FA-Mia-07
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Anderson, Charlie	LB	6'4"	245	3	Ole Miss	D6c-04
51	Barber, Shawn	LB	6'2"	240	9	Richmond	FA-Phi-07
55	Clark, Danny	LB	6'2"	245	7	Illinois	FA-NO-07
56	Greenwood, Morlon	LB	6'0"	234	6	Syracuse	FA-Mia-05
53	Orr, Shantee	LB	6'0"	246	4	Michigan	FA-03
	Polk, DaShon	LB	6'2"	245	7	Arizona	FA-Buf-04
59	Ryans, DeMeco	LB	6'1"	239	1	Alabama	D2-06
52	Wong, Kailee	LB	6'2"	244	8	Stanford	FA-Min-02
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
22	Alexander, Roc	CB	5'10"	190	3	Washington	W-Den-06
24	Brown, C.C.	FS	6'0"	204	2	UL Lafayette	D6-05
26	Earl, Glenn	SS	6'1"	213	3	Notre Dame	D4-04
38	Faggins, Demarcus	CB	5'10"	179	5	Kansas State	D6a-02
21	Fletcher, Jamar	CB	5'10"	186	6	Wisconsin	FA-Det-07
34	Hutchins, Von	CB	5'10"	180	3	Ole Miss	FA-06
20	McCleon, Dexter	CB	5'10"	195	10	Clemson	FA-06
28	McKenzie, Chris	CB	5'8"	177	2	Arizona State	FA-05
23	Robinson, Dunta	CB	5'10"	180	3	South Carolina	D1a-04
30	Simmons, Jason	FS	5'9"	204	9	Arizona State	FA-Pit-02
40	Walker, John	FS	6'1"	204	1	USC	FA-06
25	Wynn, Dexter	CB	5'9"	177	3	Colorado State	FA-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
3	Brown, Kris	K	5'11"	208	8	Nebraska	FA-Pit-02
48	Pittman, Bryan	LS	6'3"	282	4	Washington	FA-03
7	Stanley, Chad	P	6'3"	209	7	Stephen F. Austin	FA-02

Head Coach: Gary Kubiak (6–10, 0–0 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Sherman
Defensive Coordinator: Richard Smith

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	80	Andre Johnson
WR	85	Kevin Walter
LT	77	Charles Spencer
LG	69	Chester Pitts
C	58	Mike Flanagan
RG	70	Fred Weary
RT	73	Eric Winston
TE	81	Owen Daniels
QB	**8**	**Matt Schaub**
FB	44	Vonta Leach
RB	**30**	**Ahman Green**

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	92	Anthony Weaver
DT	95	Anthony Maddox
DT		**Amobi Okoye**
DE	90	Mario Williams
WLB	56	Morlon Greenwood
MLB	59	DeMeco Ryans
SLB	53	Shantee Orr
CB	23	Dunta Robinson
CB	38	Demarcus Faggins
SS	26	Glenn Earl
FS	24	C.C. Brown

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	3	Kris Brown
P	7	Chad Stanley

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	18	Sage Rosenfels
RB	36	Ron Dayne
LT	**65**	**Jordan Black**
TE	87	Mark Bruener
DE	93	Jason Babin

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Reliant Stadium (71,500)
Surface: Grass
Ticket Info: 866-468-3926
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Training Camp: Reliant Park (Houston)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions		Key Losses	
LB	Shawn Barber (Phi)	QB	David Carr (Car)
T	Jordan Black (KC)	WR	Eric Moulds (FA)
LB	Danny Clark (NO)	DL	Seth Payne (FA)
WR	Andre' Davis (Buf)	LB	Antwan Peek (Cle)
CB	Jamar Fletcher (Det)	CB	Lewis Sanders (Atl)
RB	Ahman Green (GB)	OL	Zach Wiegert (FA)
QB	Matt Schaub (Atl)	RB	Domanick Williams (FA)
DT	Jeff Zgonina (Mia)		

2007 Draft

1.	Amobi Okoye	DT	6'2"	287	Louisville
3.	Jacoby Jones	WR	6'3"	210	Lane
4.	Fred Bennett	CB	6'1"	195	South Carolina
5.	Brandon Harrison	SS	6'2"	227	Stanford
5.	Brandon Frye	T	6'4"	302	Virginia Tech
6.	Kasey Studdard	G	6'2"	307	Texas
7.	Zach Diles	ILB	6'0"	240	Kansas State

Aside from Carr and Moulds, the Texans didn't lose any of the starters who helped them win three of five games in December. They added at least three new starters in Schaub, Okoye (a rookie) and Green. All three are expected to be new faces of the franchise and make significant impacts in their first seasons with the team. A slew of other additions hopes to break into that starting lineup. Black could become the starting left tackle if Charles Spencer isn't back from his injury yet. Clark and Barber will vie for a starting job at linebacker. Jones will likely return kickoffs and compete for playing time at wide receiver. The loss of Peek opens up the opportunity for even more playing time for Jason Babin as a situational pass rusher.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
David Carr*	442	302	2,767	11	12
Sage Rosenfels	39	27	265	3	1
Rushing **Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**		
Ron Dayne	151	612	4.1	5	
Wali Lundy	124	476	3.8	4	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Andre Johnson	103	1,147	11.1	5	
Eric Moulds*	57	557	9.8	1	
Owen Daniels	34	352	10.4	5	

Kicking: Kris Brown, 19-25 FGs, 26-27 XPs, 83 points
Tackles: DeMeco Ryans, 155; Morlon Greenwood, 109
Sacks: Jason Babin, 5
Interceptions: DeMarcus Faggins, 2; Dunta Robinson, 2
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (6–10)

Sept.	10	Philadelphia	L	10–24
Sept.	17	at Indianapolis	L	24–43
Sept.	24	Washington	L	15–31
Oct.	1	Miami	W	17–15
Oct.	15	at Dallas	L	6–34
Oct.	22	Jacksonville	W	27– 7
Oct.	29	at Tennessee	L	22–28
Nov.	5	at N.Y. Giants	L	10–14
Nov.	12	at Jacksonville	W	13–10
Nov.	19	Buffalo	L	21–24
Nov.	26	at N.Y. Jets	L	11–26
Dec.	3	at Oakland	W	23–14
Dec.	10	Tennessee (OT)	L	20–26
Dec.	17	at New England	L	7–40
Dec.	24	Indianapolis	W	27–24
Dec.	31	Cleveland	W	14– 6

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	279.1	28	-43.0
Rushing	105.4	21	-11.9
Passing	173.6	27	-31.2
Scoring	16.7	28	-4.0
Punt Returns	10.5	6	+1.8
Kick Returns	22.7	16	+0.2
Red Zone TD %	57.1	9	+6.3
Defense			
Total Defense	337.5	24	+15.4
Against Rush	122.3	20	+5.0
Against Pass	215.3	22	+10.5
Points Allowed	22.9	25T	+2.2
Interceptions	11	28T	-5.3
Sacks	28	27T	-8.3
Turnover Diff.	-3	21	-

COLTS

If the Indianapolis Colts did anything this past year, and especially during their postseason run to the Super Bowl championship, they were able to put to rest several misconceptions that have hounded the team for the past several years.

"(The Super Bowl win) was very satisfying because we've been labeled a lot of things," Indianapolis coach Tony Dungy says. "We've been labeled as a team that could do well in the regular season but couldn't finish it off in the playoffs. We've been labeled a finesse team, a passing offense. We've been labeled a soft defense. We've been labeled a dome team. I talk about perception and reality a lot to the players. And I point out where we are in reality that people don't really understand. We have as good a record on the road as we have at home. We run the ball as well as anybody in the league for the past seven or eight years.

"So a lot of things, we don't have to dissect and discuss. But I think it's great for the country to see that we could win a lot of different ways. We won low-scoring field goal games, we won defensive games, we won with run defense, we won when we had to score 30 points in the second half against a great defense that New England has (in the AFC title game). I just think that shows what type of team we have, one that's very, very flexible and one that do a lot more than people think."

Dungy adds that the team has bought in to the idea that when they play to their strengths and don't get caught up in another team's style, the Colts can be very effective on both sides of the ball.

"We do what we do," he says. "When we play our game and we don't worry about who we play or where we're playing or what's going on or any of those circumstances, that's what I wanted to get across to this team, whether it's the Super Bowl or any big game. But if we just do our jobs and every guy doing what's capable of, we're going to be fine."

Quarterbacks Peyton Manning is the man for the Colts and will remain so for quite a long time. Interestingly, despite all of his success, he continues to get better at this job. Last season, Manning displayed more mobility and a willingness to move around the pocket in order to buy more time for his receivers to get open. And his ability to become a better game manager and take what the defenses are giving him rather than force balls into coverage played a large part in Indianapolis' success a year ago. Jim Sorgi is back as Manning's primary backup. Sorgi has seen limited playing time but has shown a good grasp of the offense when called upon. Former Arizona reserve John Navarre was brought in to battle for the team's No. 3 job.

Running Backs Second-year runner Joseph Addai will be the starter, but the Colts must find a replacement for Dominic Rhodes (now in Oakland) in the team's rotation system. Addai, who led all rookies in rushing last year with 1,081 yards on 226 carries, and Rhodes were a productive duo. DeDe Dorsey, a third-stringer after being picked up from Cincinnati at the end of training camp last year, will most likely get the first shot at the job. Other potential candidates will probably be Luke Lawton, Kenton Keith and undrafted rookie free agent Clifton Dawson. Lawton was on the Colts' practice squad a year ago while Keith is moving down from the Canadian Football League.

Marvin Harrison

Receivers Marvin Harrison and Reggie Wayne return, along with tight end deluxe Dallas Clark, which should once again give the Colts a potent passing attack. Aaron Moorehead and John Standeford also return in backup roles, as do tight ends Ben Utecht and Bryan Fletcher. Both Utecht and Fletcher made key contributions a year ago. Anthony Gonzalez, Indianapolis' first-round draft pick in 2007, will be a contender for the team's primary slot receiver. Gonzalez' Ohio State teammate, fifth-round draft pick Roy

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE COLTS

The 2006 season was largely one of transition on several levels as the Indianapolis Colts won their first-ever Super Bowl and the second title in franchise history. Now, heading into the 2007 campaign, those who have gotten used to seeing the Colts' offense put up big statistical numbers should now probably get used to seeing a little bit of everything. Defensively, the Colts struggled for most of the regular season, but the unit was able to turn things around late in the season and had an impressive run through the playoffs en route to the Super Bowl title. It's hoped that the Colts' defensive turnaround continues into this year. The key for Indianapolis is not falling into the trap that has befallen other defending Super Bowl champions. With Tony Dungy returning to lead the charge, complacency isn't expected to be a problem. Dungy, who was a part of the Pittsburgh Steelers dynasty as a player back in the late 1970s and early 1980s, knows the challenges that lie ahead. But after winning one Super Bowl title, he wants to prove that his team was not a flash-in-pan that "got lucky" in the postseason. The Colts have a point to prove, and it's up to Dungy and Co. to show everybody that they're up to the challenge.

2006 Record: 12–4

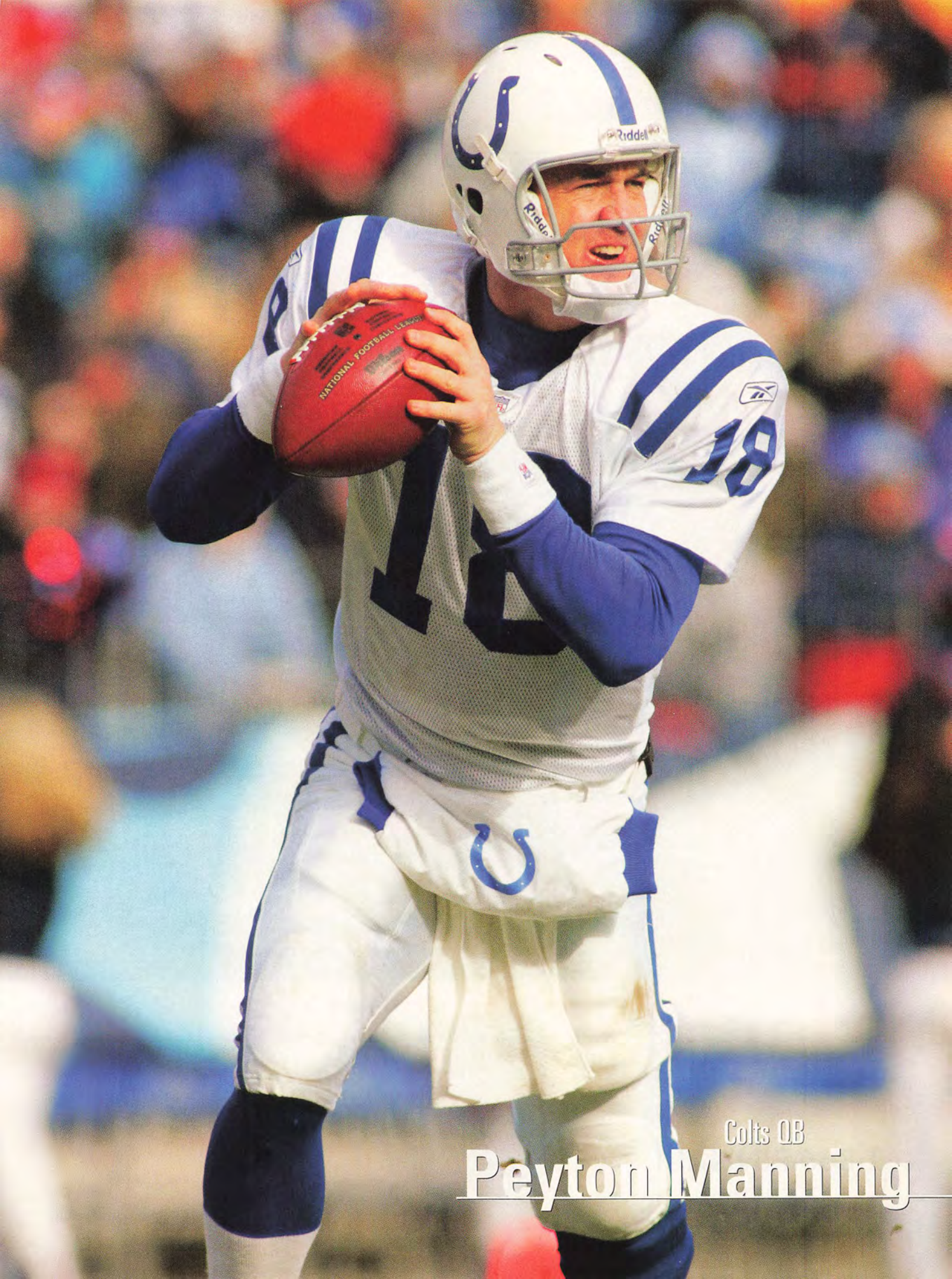
2007 AFC South Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	6	New Orleans	8:30 pm
Sept.	16	at Tennessee	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Houston	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	Denver	4:15 pm
Oct.	7	Tampa Bay	4:05 pm
Week	6	BYE	
Oct.	22	at Jacksonville	8:30 pm
Oct.	28	at Carolina	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	New England	4:15 pm
Nov.	11	at San Diego	8:15 pm
Nov.	18	Kansas City	1:00 pm
Nov.	22	at Atlanta	8:15 pm
Dec.	2	Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at Baltimore	8:15 pm
Dec.	16	at Oakland	4:05 pm
Dec.	23	Houston	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	Tennessee	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Harrison: David Drapkin/Getty Images
Manning: Tim Clark/Allsion Sports



Colts QB

Peyton Manning

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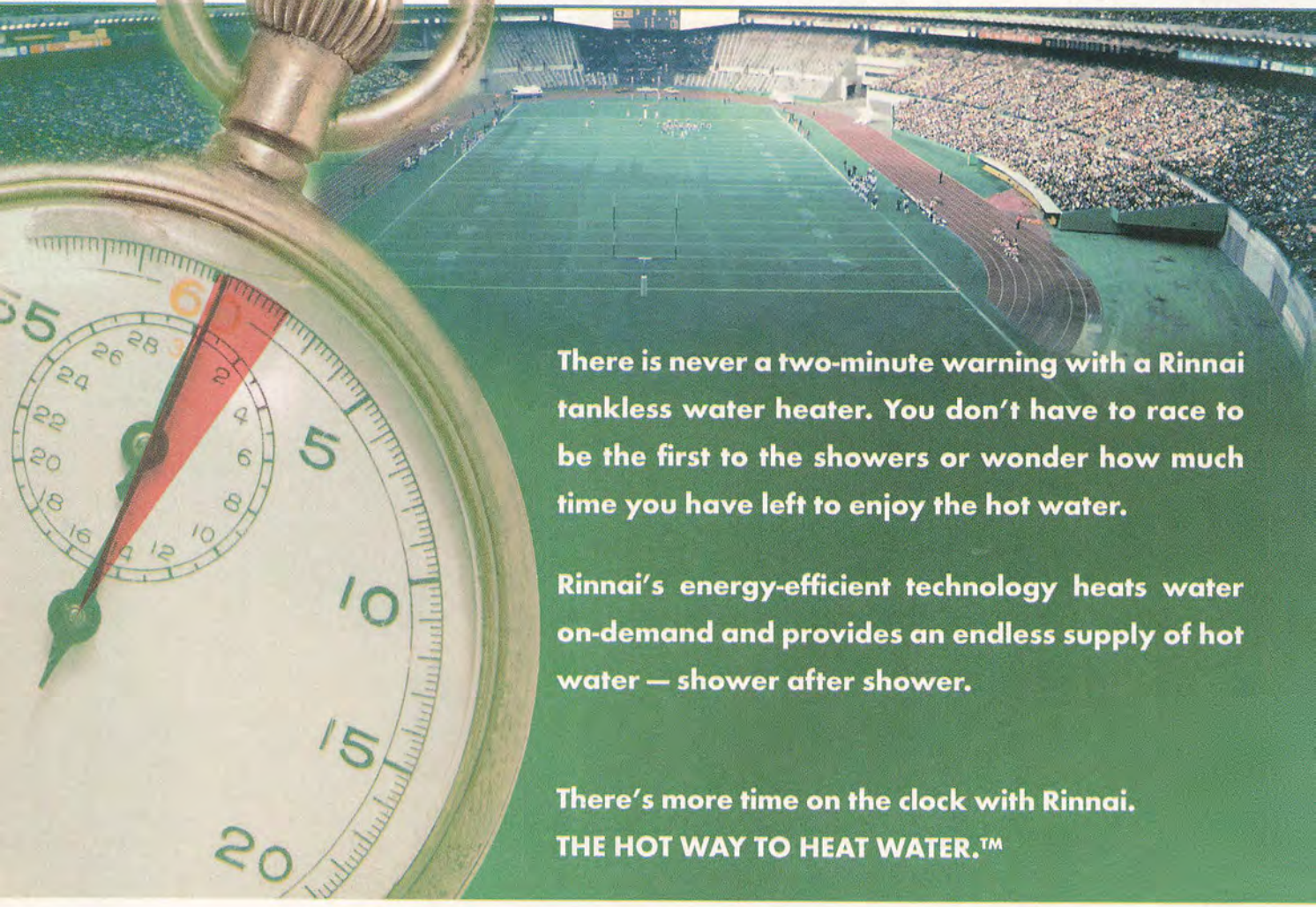

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Joseph Addai

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Columbus run The Colts drafted three players from the same school for the first time since 1987. Indianapolis, which took three from Ohio State this year, had three from Alabama in 1987. The franchise also had three from Maryland in 1975.

Getting defensive Since taking over as the team's president in 1998, Bill Polian has directed drafts in which 29 defensive players and 15 offensive players were selected on the second day. Four defensive players were taken this year on the second day.

TV time Five nationally televised games, plus four late afternoon contests, highlight the Colts' 2007 regular-season schedule. "I think that goes with the territory, being the defending (Super Bowl) champions," Colts coach Tony Dungy says. "We knew that a lot of people would want to see us."

Familiar faces The Colts will have to win on the road against all three of its AFC South foes during the early portion of the schedule. "We said last year that was going to be important to win those games at home because we had them early and make the other teams chase us and not have to get into must-win situations coming down the stretch on the road," Dungy says.

Hall, is an athlete who is considered somewhat of a project. The Colts added former Detroit receiver Craphonso Thorpe on waivers in the offseason. Thorpe spent time on the Lions' practice squad a year ago.

Offensive Linemen A pair of Pro Bowl selections, center Jeff Saturday and offensive tackle Tarik Glenn, are the foundation of a largely underpublicized Colts offensive line that also features the talents of guards Ryan Lilja, Dylan Gandy and Jake Scott along with tackle Ryan Diem. Gandy and Lilja shared playing time last season. Diem battled some injury problems a year ago but was effectively replaced by rookie Charlie Johnson. Guard Matt Ulrich, along with second-year tackles Michael Toudouze and Daniel Federkeil, are also back. Guard Rick DeMulling, a former seventh-round draft choice in 2001 by Indianapolis, returns after two seasons in Detroit. Second-round draft pick Tony Ugoh will start out as a guard but will eventually be moved out to tackle.

Defensive Linemen Indianapolis have attempted to strengthen the position with the addition of Anthony McFarland last year and with third-round draft pick Quinn Pitcock this year. Raheem Brock returns, as do backups Darrell Reid and Dan Klecko, to help fortify the interior. Pitcock is expected to be a force in the middle of the line, even as a rookie. Ends Dwight Freeney and Robert Mathis give Indianapolis two strong pass rushers from the outside. Mathis led the team with 9.5 sacks a year ago while Freeney had just 5.5, although the franchise's all-time sack leader had a team-high 33 quarterback hurries. Josh Thomas, Bo Schobel and Ryan LaCasse also return in backup roles. Keyunta Dawson was drafted in the seventh round as an end but could get a look at tackle.

Linebackers Former Pro Bowl selection Cato June is now with Tampa Bay, meaning both the weak- and strong-side linebacker slots will be up for grabs. Rob Morris, a former starter at middle linebacker, played relatively well on the strong side during the team's postseason run to the Super Bowl. Gary Brackett returns at middle linebacker. Freddy Keiaho, taken in the third round of the 2006 draft, is expected to be a prime candidate for the weak side job. Gilbert Gardner started 12 games on the strong side a year ago but was replaced after several inconsistent performances. Rocky Boiman, Tyjuan Hagler and Keith O'Neil are also back, with Boiman perhaps finally getting an opportunity to play at either outside linebacking spot. Indianapolis' fourth-round draft pick, Clint Session, will most likely make a push for playing time as well.

Defensive Backs Despite the loss of both starting cornerbacks from a year ago, a good core group of young defensive backs return. Strong safety Bob Sanders and 2006 sixth-round pick Antoine Bethea top the list of key returnees, along with Marlin Jackson and Kelvin Hayden, the team's top two draft picks in 2005. Jackson and Hayden will get an opportunity to start at cornerback. Tim Jennings is also back after seeing limited work as a rookie last year. Safety Matt Giordano, who filled in for an injured Sanders in 2006, and cornerback T.J. Rushing also return. Giordano proved to be a very capable backup with an ability to deliver some big hits. Daymeion Hughes, Michael Coe and Brannon Condren, three of the Colts' 2007 draft picks, should see playing time. Hughes may be the best of that group and could work his way into a role in the team's nickel package.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Peyton Manning, QB
Needs no justification as fantasy's top QB, but to take him over a RB in the first round could be a mistake.
Marvin Harrison, WR
Age (35) becoming more of a factor, but until his stats reflect a slow down, he's still an elite fantasy receiver.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists Kicker Adam Vinatieri and punter Hunter Smith give Indianapolis two of the best at their respective positions in the league. But who is going to handle the team's kickoff and punt return duties? Rushing was drafted in 2006 to be the primary kick returner but was edged out by Terrence Wilkins. Wilkins, however, was not re-signed. Rushing and Gonzalez may be called upon to return punts and kickoffs, as will Hughes.

Coaching Staff Former special assistant to the head coach/defensive assistant Leslie Frazier is now the Minnesota Vikings' defensive coordinator. And Diron Reynolds, who had been Indianapolis' defensive quality control coach, has taken over as the Miami Dolphins' new defensive line coach. Despite those moves, the Colts still have a veteran and experienced coaching staff returning for 2007. Offensive coordinator Tom Moore and defensive coordinator Ron Meeks are back as are the rest of the staff. Former Carolina secondary coach Rod Perry was hired to replace Frazier and will work with secondary coach Alan Williams.

Addai, Manning: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

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PERSONAL TRAINER

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
18	Manning, Peyton	QB	6'5"	230	9	Tennessee	D1-98
16	Navarre, John	QB	6'6"	243	3	Michigan	FA-Ari-07
12	Sorgi, Jim	QB	6'5"	196	3	Wisconsin	D6b-04
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
29	Addai, Joseph	RB	5'11"	214	1	LSU	D1-06
31	Chapman, Kory	RB	6'1"	202	2	Jacksonville State	FA-06
25	Dorsey, DeDe	RB	5'11"	196	1	Lindenwood	W-Cin-06
23	Mungro, James	RB	5'9"	214	5	Syracuse	W-Det-02
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
44	Clark, Dallas	TE	6'3"	252	4	Iowa	D1-03
81	Fletcher, Bryan	TE	6'5"	230	2	UCLA	FA-05
88	Harrison, Marvin	WR	6'0"	185	11	Syracuse	D1-96
85	Moorehead, Aaron	WR	6'3"	200	4	Illinois	FA-03
82	Seidman, Mike	TE	6'4"	261	4	UCLA	FA-Car-07
84	Standeford, John	WR	6'4"	206	1	Purdue	FA-06
15	Thorpe, Craphonso	WR	6'0"	187	1	Florida State	FA-06
86	Utecht, Ben	TE	6'6"	251	3	Minnesota	FA-04
87	Wayne, Reggie	WR	6'0"	198	6	Miami	D1b-01
10	Wilkins, Terrence	WR	5'10"	180	6	Virginia	FA-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
71	Diem, Ryan	T	6'6"	320	6	Northern Illinois	D4-01
64	DeMulling, Rick	G	6'4"	310	6	Idaho	FA-Det-07
76	Federkeil, Dan	T	6'6"	290	1	Calgary	FA-06
57	Gandy, Dylan	C/G	6'3"	302	2	Texas Tech	D4a-05
78	Glenn, Tarik	T	6'5"	332	10	California	D1-97
74	Johnson, Charlie	T	6'4"	305	1	Oklahoma State	D6a-06
65	Lilja, Ryan	G	6'2"	290	3	Kansas State	W-KC-04
63	Saturday, Jeff	C	6'2"	295	8	North Carolina	FA-99
73	Scott, Jake	G	6'5"	295	3	Idaho	D5a-04
75	Toudouze, Michael	T	6'6"	303	1	TCU	FA-06
69	Ulrich, Matt	G	6'2"	309	2	Northwestern	FA-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
79	Brock, Raheem	DT	6'4"	274	5	Temple	FA-02
93	Freeney, Dwight	DE	6'1"	268	5	Syracuse	D1-02
90	Klecko, Dan	DT	5'11"	275	4	Temple	W-NE-06
99	LaCasse, Ryan	DE	6'2"	257	1	Syracuse	T-Bal-06
98	Mathis, Robert	DE	6'2"	245	4	Alabama A&M	D5a-03
92	McFarland, Anthony	DT	6'0"	300	8	LSU	T-TB-06
95	Reid, Darrell	DT	6'2"	288	2	Minnesota	FA-05
96	Schobel, Bo	DE	6'5"	264	3	TCU	FA-06
97	Simon, Corey	DT	6'2"	300	7	Florida State	FA-Phi-05
91	Thomas, Josh	DE	6'5"	271	3	Syracuse	FA-04
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Boiman, Rocky	LB	6'4"	236	5	Notre Dame	FA-06
58	Brackett, Gary	LB	5'11"	235	4	Rutgers	FA-03
56	Hagler, Tyjuan	LB	6'0"	236	1	Cincinnati	D5c-05
54	Keiaho, Freddy	LB	5'11"	226	1	San Diego State	D3-06
94	Morris, Rob	LB	6'2"	243	7	BYU	D1-00
53	O'Neil, Keith	LB	6'0"	240	4	Northern Arizona	W-Dal-05
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
41	Bethea, Antoine	S	5'11"	203	1	Howard	D6b-06
43	Giordano, Matt	S	5'11"	200	2	California	D4b-05
26	Hayden, Kelvin	CB	6'0"	195	2	Illinois	D2-05
28	Jackson, Marlin	CB	6'0"	196	2	Michigan	D1-05
27	Jennings, Tim	DB	5'8"	185	1	Georgia	D2-06
36	Reid, Dexter	DB	5'11"	203	3	North Carolina	FA-06
34	Rushing, T.J.	CB	5'9"	186	1	Stanford	FA-06
21	Sanders, Bob	S	5'8"	206	3	Iowa	D2b-04
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
48	Snow, Justin	LS	6'3"	240	7	Baylor	FA-00
17	Smith, Hunter	P	6'2"	209	8	Notre Dame	D7a-99
4	Vinatieri, Adam	K	6'0"	202	11	South Dakota St.	FA-NE-06

Head Coach: Tony Dungy (114–62, 9–8 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Tom Moore
Defensive Coordinator: Ron Meeks

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	88	Marvin Harrison
WR	87	Reggie Wayne
LT	78	Tarik Glenn
LG	65	Ryan Lilja
C	63	Jeff Saturday
RG	73	Jake Scott
RT	71	Ryan Diem
TE	86	Ben Utecht
HB	44	Dallas Clark
QB	18	Peyton Manning
RB	29	Joseph Addai

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	98	Robert Mathis
DT	92	Anthony McFarland
DT	79	Raheem Brock
DE	93	Dwight Freeney
SLB	94	Rob Morris
MLB	58	Gary Brackett
WLB	54	Freddy Keiaho
CB	26	Kelvin Hayden
CB	28	Marlin Jackson
SS	41	Antoine Bethea
FS	21	Bob Sanders

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	4	Adam Vinatieri
P	17	Hunter Smith

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	12	Jim Sorgi
TE	81	Bryan Fletcher
WR	**11**	**Anthony Gonzalez**
LB	50	Rocky Boiman
CB	**20**	**Daymeion Hughes**

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: RCA Stadium (60,272)
Surface: Field turf
www.colts.com
Ticket Info: 317-297-7000
Training Camp: Rose Hulman (Terre Haute, Ind.)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

G	Rick DeMulling (Det)	

Key Losses

CB	Jason David (NO)
S	Mike Doss (Min)
CB	Nick Harper (Ten)
LB	Cato June (TB)
DT	Montae Reagor (Phi)
RB	Dominic Rhodes (Oak)
WR	Brandon Stokley (Den)

2007 Draft

1.	Anthony Gonzalez	WR	6'0"	195	Ohio State
2.	Tony Ugoh	G	6'5"	305	Arkansas
3.	Daymeion Hughes	CB	5'10"	192	California
3.	Quinn Pitcock	DT	6'3"	301	Ohio State
4.	Brannon Condren	FS	6'1"	208	Troy
4.	Clint Session	OLB	5'11"	236	Pittsburgh
5.	Roy Hall	WR	6'2"	229	Ohio State
5.	Michael Coe	CB	6'1"	190	Alabama State
7.	Keyunta Dawson	DE	6'0"	268	Texas Tech

The Colts lost key personnel on both sides of the ball, but it was the hit on the defense that may cost the team in the early going. Indianapolis allowed June and Harper, both unrestricted free agents, to sign contracts with Tampa Bay and Tennessee, respectively. Reagor and Stokley had their contracts terminated after injury-plagued seasons. Reagor moved on to Philadelphia while Stokley inked a deal with Denver. Doss, who missed a significant amount of playing time in 2006 with a knee injury, signed with Minnesota. David, the Colts' other starting cornerback, was a restricted free agent but signed an offer sheet with the New Orleans Saints. Indianapolis opted not to match the offer. Rhodes was a key contributor during the run to the Super Bowl but wanted more playing time, which led to his move to Oakland.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Peyton Manning	557	362	4,397	31	9
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Joseph Addai	226	1,081	4.8	7	
Dominic Rhodes*	187	641	3.4	5	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Marvin Harrison	95	1,366	14.4	12	
Reggie Wayne	86	1,310	15.2	9	
Ben Utecht	37	377	10.2	0	
Dallas Clark	30	367	12.2	4	

Kicking: Adam Vinatieri, 25-28 FGs, 38-38 XPs, 113 points
Tackles: Cato June*, 142; Gary Brackett, 120
Sacks: Robert Mathis, 9.5
Interceptions: Nick Harper*, 3; Cato June*, 3
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (12–4)

Sept.	10	at N.Y. Giants	W	26–21
Sept.	17	Houston	W	43–24
Sept.	24	Jacksonville	W	21–14
Oct.	1	at N.Y. Jets	W	31–28
Oct.	8	Tennessee	W	14–13
Oct.	22	Washington	W	36–22
Oct.	29	at Denver	W	34–31
Nov.	5	at New England	W	27–20
Nov.	12	Buffalo	W	17–16
Nov.	19	at Dallas	L	14–21
Nov.	26	Philadelphia	W	45–21
Dec.	3	at Tennessee	L	17–20
Dec.	10	at Jacksonville	L	17–44
Dec.	18	Cincinnati	W	34–16
Dec.	24	at Houston	L	24–27
Dec.	31	Miami	W	27–22
		Postseason		
Jan.	6	Kansas City	W	23– 8
Jan.	13	at Baltimore	W	15– 6
Jan.	21	New England	W	38–34
		Super Bowl		
Feb.	4	Chicago	W	29–17

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	379.4	3	+57.3
Rushing	110.1	18	-7.2
Passing	269.3	2	+64.5
Scoring	26.7	2T	+6.0
Punt Returns	9.0	13	+0.3
Kick Returns	23.6	7	+1.1
Red Zone TD %	66.1	2	+15.3
Defense			
Total Defense	332.3	21	+10.2
Against Rush	173.0	32	+55.7
Against Pass	159.3	2	-45.5
Points Allowed	22.5	23	+1.8
Interceptions	15	20T	-1.3
Sacks	25	30T	-11.3
Turnover Diff.	+7	6T	-

JAGUARS

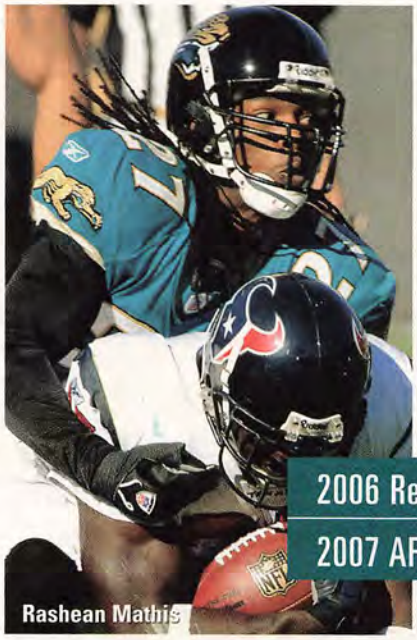
The Jaguars are something of a puzzle as they enter the 2007 season. Are they the team that went 15–4 in 19 regular season games from the 2004 season finale through the first two games of 2006? Or are they the team that went 6–8 in the final 14 games last year and lost its last three games to miss the playoffs?

The upcoming season should provide the answer and determine whether coach Jack Del Rio has a future with the team. After failing to win a playoff game in his first four seasons, Del Rio probably needs to make the playoffs to save his job. Noting they beat the eventual Super Bowl champions the past two years, Del Rio remains upbeat and says the Jaguars can "compete with anybody." Now they have to prove he's right.

Quarterbacks The quarterback situation is in a state of flux. Byron Leftwich lost his job after the sixth game last year. Del Rio said the reason was that Leftwich's ankle was ailing. Leftwich felt he could have played. In any case, David Garrard, who started the last 10 games before being benched in the second half of the season finale in Kansas City, didn't play well enough to win the job. Del Rio admitted after the season his relationship with both quarterbacks was tarnished and he's trying to patch things up. But even though Del Rio named Leftwich the starter in February, Leftwich continued to work out in South Florida and didn't show up at the Jaguars' camp until the organized team activities started in May. Complicating the situation is the fact that Del Rio wanted to draft quarterback Brady Quinn but was overruled by Jack "Shack" Harris, the vice president of Player Personnel. Leftwich is in the final year of his contract, and there's no guarantee he wants to stay with the team even if he does play well. The bottom line is that the Jaguars need better quarterbacking this year.

Running Backs The running game was the heart of the offense last year as Fred Taylor (1,146) and rookie Maurice Jones-Drew (941) combined for over 2,000 yards rushing to give the Jaguars the third-best rushing attack in the league. Taylor and Jones-Drew should again form a strong combo, but Taylor has to show he's not slowing down at age 31, and Jones-Drew, who's only 5'7", has to prove his rookie season wasn't a fluke. Jones-Drew got a lot of yardage on draw plays on passing downs when opposing teams weren't playing the run, and they may not be fooled as much by the tactic this year. Another concern is whether Taylor can stay healthy. He rushed only nine times in the last three games when he was bothered with a hamstring injury and the Jaguars lost all three games. Greg Jones hopes to return from a torn ACL to bolster the fullback position.

Receivers This position is the team's major weakness. Neither Reggie Williams nor Matt Jones, drafted in the first round in 2004 and 2005, respectively, to be the receiving corps of the future, stepped up last year when Jimmy Smith retired. The Jags didn't have a receiver in the top 50 in the league as Williams caught only 52 passes and Jones, slowed by nagging injuries, had 41. The Jaguars signed Dennis Northcutt to add speed at the slot receiver position, and Ernest Wilford is a reliable backup who wound up starting 12 games last year but caught only 36 passes. They also drafted Mike Walker of UCF in the third round, and while he's coming off an ACL injury, he ran 4.35 at the combine. Walker could play a major role in upgrading the wide receiver corps. The tight end position is up for grabs now that Kyle Brady, who was mainly a blocker, refused a pay cut and signed with New England. George Wrighster, who had 39 catches, is coming off torn labrum surgery. Marcedes Lewis, a first-round pick last year, is supposed to be the tight end of the future but had a disappointing rookie season and caught only 13 passes. Veteran Jermaine Wiggins was added to the mix as a free agent.



Rashean Mathis

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE JAGUARS

If a team ranks third in rushing the ball and fourth in stopping the run, it usually makes the playoffs. Yet the Jaguars did that last year and still missed the postseason after finishing 8–8. The problem was the passing game that ranked 24th. The team was hampered by instability at quarterback and a shaky receiving corps. Fixing the passing game is the key to this season, which will likely determine the future of coach Jack Del Rio. If he fails to make the playoffs, he'll probably be gone. The quarterback play must improve, but the situation is complicated by the rift between Del Rio and Byron Leftwich, who is still annoyed that Del Rio pulled him after six games when he had an ankle injury. Leftwich felt he could still play on the tender ankle. His replacement, David Garrard, wasn't the answer, so Del Rio has named Leftwich the starter again. Meanwhile, Del Rio wanted to draft Brady Quinn but was overruled by James "Shack" Harris, the vice president of Player Personnel who still believes in Leftwich. Regardless of what happens this year, they still have long-term issues because Leftwich is in the final year of his contract and may not want to return even if he plays well. And Harris' decision to bypass Quinn leaves the team without a long-term alternative. Until the team finds the answer at quarterback, the Jaguars won't be a Super Bowl contender.

2006 Record: 8–8

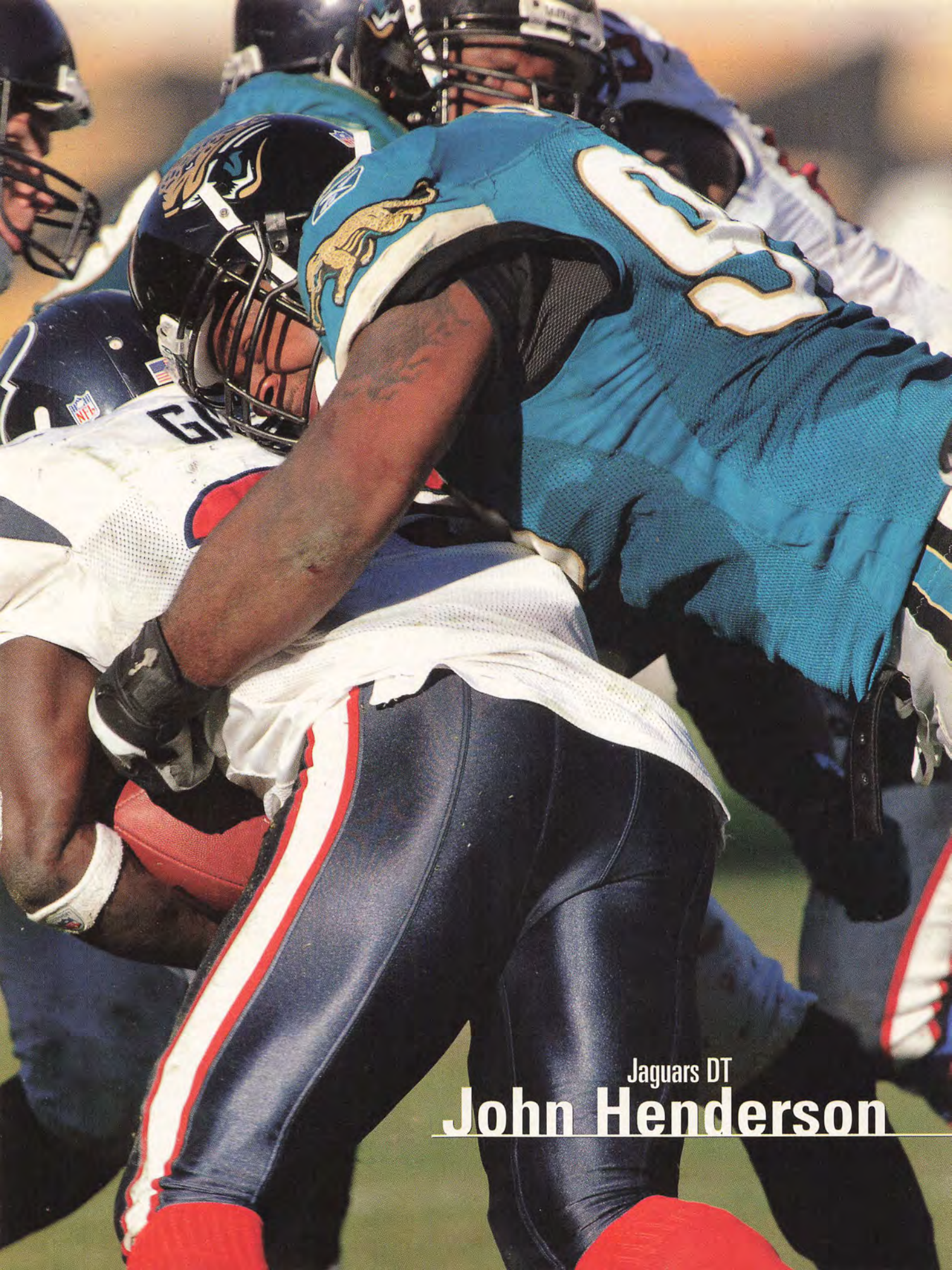
2007 AFC South Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Tennessee	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	Atlanta	1:00 pm
Sept.	23	at Denver	4:05 pm
Week	4	BYE	
Oct.	7	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	Houston	1:00 pm
Oct.	22	Indianapolis	8:30 pm
Oct.	28	at Tampa Bay	4:05 pm
Nov.	4	at New Orleans	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	at Tennessee	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	San Diego	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	Buffalo	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Indianapolis	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	Carolina	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	at Pittsburgh	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	Oakland	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	at Houston	1:00 pm

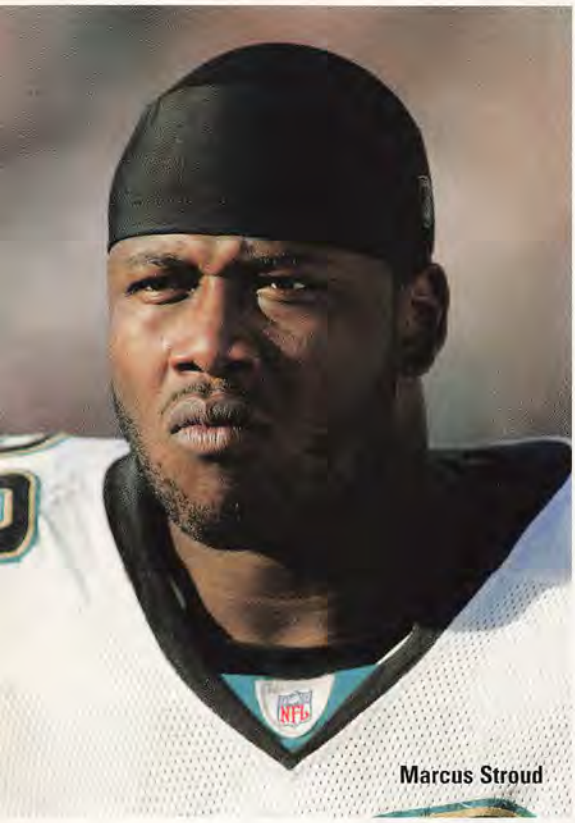
All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Matthis, Henderson: Mark Langello



Jaguars DT

John Henderson



Marcus Stroud

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Home team The Jaguars have to improve their road record this year if they're to make a playoff run. They were 6–2 at home last year and 2–6 on the road.

For what it's worth Each of the last two Super Bowl champions lost to the Jaguars during the regular season. The Jags beat Pittsburgh on the road in 2005 and Indianapolis at home last year.

Running wild Maurice Jones-Drew, who fell to the 60th pick of the draft last year, turned out to be a steal as he set an NFL rookie record by scoring a touchdown in eight straight games. He also led all NFL running backs with a 5.7 average per carry, and his 2,250 all-purpose yards were third-best in NFL history for rookies, a figure topped only by Gale Sayers and Tim Brown.

It's been a while The Jaguars ended the careers of Dan Marino and Jimmy Johnson by crushing the Miami Dolphins, 61–7, in the 1999 playoffs. They haven't won a playoff game since.

Getting it done Fred Taylor's career average of 4.6 yards per carry is the fifth-best in NFL history. The only players ahead of him are Jim Brown (5.2), Barry Sanders (5.0), Tiki Barber (4.7) and O.J. Simpson (4.7).

Offensive Linemen The Jaguars allowed just 30 sacks, 12th-fewest in the NFL, but they weren't satisfied with the play of right tackle Mo Williams, and they signed free agent Tony Pashos from Baltimore to replace him. He's supposed to be a better pass blocker than Williams and will give Leftwich more protection. The rest of the line is intact with Brad Meester at center and veteran Chris Naeole and young Vince Manuwai at the guard slots. Khalif Barnes returns for his third year at left tackle. He showed a lot of promise in his rookie season but suffered a sophomore slump last year. He also was caught on a police videotape calling Jacksonville a "hick town" after being arrested on a DUI charge. Williams will challenge Barnes for a starting job. This is a solid line, but none of the players has made the Pro Bowl.

Defensive Linemen Jacksonville's twin towers in the middle at defensive tackle, Marcus Stroud and John Henderson, anchor the line. They're the key to the Jags' defense, although Stroud has to prove that he can stay healthy after missing five games with an ankle injury last year. The injury hadn't healed well enough for him to participate in the May mini-camp. The defensive end position is unsettled. Reggie Hayward suffered a torn Achilles' tendon in the season opener last year, and there's no guarantee he'll once again be the player who had 8.5 sacks in 2005. Bobby McCray stepped up and recorded 10 sacks, but he's unhappy that he hasn't received a new contract, and he skipped the offseason program. Paul Spicer is a solid journeyman who started all 16 games last year, but he turns 32 in August. Rob Meier is a dependable swingman who can play tackle and end. Brent Hawkins is a second-year player who showed potential before he went on IR in November with a groin injury.

Linebackers The Jaguars' 4-3 defense is designed to funnel the runners to the linebackers, who make the tackles. Middle linebacker Mike Peterson was the leading tackler for three years before he suffered a torn pectoral muscle in the fifth game. Daryl Smith then stepped into the middle and led the team in tackles. Clint Ingram also played well when he started outside in Smith's old spot. Now Peterson is back, and they've drafted another quick, fast linebacker in the second round in Justin Durant, who should add more depth to the linebacking corps. And Pat Thomas, who was vying for a starting job until he suffered a hamstring injury and wound up on IR after two games, is returning. The odd man out may be Nick Greisen, who started 10 games last year but will have to fight for a job.

Defensive Backs The Jaguars were concerned about the safety position after losing Deon Grant in free agency, especially since Donovin Darius is coming off a major injury for the second straight year. That's exactly why they drafted safeties Reggie Nelson of Florida in the first round and Josh Gattis of Wake Forest in the fifth round. Nelson will start and Gattis will give them depth. Gerald Sensabaugh, who became the starter after Darius went on IR, will give them depth. They are solid at cornerback with Rashean Mathis, who made the Pro Bowl for the first time last year while tying for third in the NFL with eight interceptions, and Brian Williams. Terry Cousin and Scott Starks play in nickel and dime packages.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Maurice Jones-Drew, RB
Unlikely to lead the Jags in either rushing or receiving, but will do enough of both to have serious fantasy impact again.

Matt Jones, WR
Will this be his breakout season? Coach Del Rio is sticking by him.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists The problems in the punting game cost special teams coach Pete Rodriguez his job last year, and Joe DeCamillis was hired to improve the situation. They took a step in the right direction by drafting one of the best collegiate punters, Adam Podlesh, to replace Chris Hanson, who struggled last year after suffering a hamstring injury. They have a dependable kicker in Josh Scobee, and Northcutt is expected to replace Alvin Pearman as the punt returner, with Jones-Drew again handling the kick return duties.

Coaching Staff Del Rio, entering his fifth season, overhauled his offensive coaching staff once again, bringing in his third offensive coordinator (Dirk Koetter) in the last four years as well as a new wide receiver coach (Todd Monken) and a new quarterback coach (Mike Shula). That's in addition to hiring a new special teams coach in DeCamillis. Del Rio has only four coaches left from his first staff in 2003, and his constant shuffling of his staff is starting to wear thin because he's yet to coach the team to a playoff victory. He may be running out of time to show he has some answers besides changing coaches.

Stroud, Taylor: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
9	Garrard, David	QB	6'2"	240	5	East Carolina	D4-02
5	Gray, Quinn	QB	6'3"	246	3	Florida A&M	FA-03
7	Leftwich, Byron	QB	6'5"	242	4	Marshall	D1-03
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
33	Jones, Greg	RB	6'1"	255	3	Florida State	D2b-04
32	Jones-Drew, Maurice	RB	5'7"	212	1	UCLA	D2-06
24	Owens, Montell	RB	5'10"	219	1	Maine	FA-06
34	Pearman, Alvin	RB	5'10"	208	2	Virginia	D4-05
28	Taylor, Fred	RB	6'1"	226	9	Florida	D1a-98
22	Toefield, LaBrandon	RB	5'11"	232	4	LSU	D4b-03
36	Wimbush, Derrick	RB	6'1"	233	2	Fort Valley State	FA-05
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
46	Estandia, Greg	TE	6'8"	240	1	UNLV	FA-06
18	Jones, Matt	WR	6'6"	238	2	Arkansas	D1-05
89	Lewis, Marcedes	TE	6'6"	265	1	UCLA	D1-06
86	Northcutt, Dennis	WR	5'11"	171	7	Arizona	FA-Cle-07
17	Sharon, Charles	WR	6'0"	184	1	Bowling Green	FA-06
85	Wiggins, Jermaine	TE	6'2"	260	7	Georgia	FA-Min-07
19	Wilford, Ernest	WR	6'4"	223	3	Virginia Tech	D4b-04
11	Williams, Reggie	WR	6'4"	214	3	Washington	D1-04
87	Wrighster, George	TE	6'3"	257	4	Oregon	D4a-03
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
69	Barnes, Khalif	T	6'5"	325	2	Washington	D5-05
76	Collier, Richard	T	6'7"	358	1	Valdosta State	FA-06
61	Connolly, Dan	C	6'4"	318	2	SE Missouri State	FA-05
72	Gibbons, Ryan	T	6'6"	318	1	Northeastern	FA-06
67	Manuwai, Vince	G	6'2"	325	4	Hawaii	D3-03
73	McDougle, Stockar	T	6'6"	348	7	Oklahoma	FA-Mia-06
63	Meester, Brad	C	6'3"	300	7	Northern Iowa	D2-00
65	Naeole, Chris	G	6'3"	330	10	Colorado	FA-NO-02
62	Norman, Dennis	G/C	6'5"	323	5	Princeton	FA-04
79	Pashos, Tony	T	6'6"	320	4	Illinois	FA-Bal-07
77	Williams, Mike	T	6'6"	370	5	Texas	FA-Buf-06
74	Williams, Maurice	T	6'5"	315	6	Michigan	D2-01
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
91	Curry, Walter	DT	6'4"	241	1	Albany State	FA-06
57	Hawkins, Brent	DE	6'2"	245	1	Illinois State	D5-06
97	Hayward, Reggie	DE	6'5"	285	6	Iowa State	FA-Den-05
98	Henderson, John	DT	6'7"	325	5	Tennessee	D1-02
93	McCray, Bobby	DE	6'6"	261	3	Florida	D7-04
96	McDaniel, Tony	DT	6'7"	295	1	Tennessee	FA-06
92	Meier, Rob	DE/DT	6'5"	298	7	Washington State	D7b-00
94	Mincey, Jeremy	DE	6'3"	260	1	Florida	FA-06
95	Spicer, Paul	DE	6'4"	296	7	Saginaw Valley State	FA-00
99	Stroud, Marcus	DT	6'6"	306	6	Georgia	D1-01
75	Wiley, Marcellus	DE	6'4"	275	10	Columbia	FA-05
94	Williams, Tony	DT	6'2"	296	9	Memphis	FA-Cin-05
90	Wyche, James	DE	6'5"	262	1	Syracuse	D7a-06
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
58	Cordova, Jorge	LB	6'1"	241	3	Nevada	D3-04
50	Gilbert, Tony	LB	6'1"	244	4	Georgia	PS-Ari-03
55	Greisen, Nick	LB	6'1"	245	5	Wisconsin	FA-NYG-06
51	Ingram, Clint	LB	6'2"	245	1	Oklahoma	D3-06
59	Iwuh, Brian	LB	6'0"	235	1	Colorado	FA-06
54	Peterson, Mike	LB	6'1"	235	8	Florida	FA-Ind-03
56	Pettway, Kenny	LB	6'4"	238	2	Grambling	FA-06
52	Smith, Daryl	LB	6'2"	244	3	Georgia Tech	D2a-04
53	Thomas, Pat	LB	6'2"	246	2	NC State	D6b-05
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
21	Cousin, Terry	CB	5'9"	185	10	South Carolina	FA-05
20	Darius, Donovin	S	6'1"	225	9	Syracuse	D1b-98
42	Fudge, Jamaal	S	5'9"	196	1	Clemson	FA-06
39	Landrom, Jamar	DB	6'3"	215	1	Tennessee State	FA-06
27	Mathis, Rashean	CB	6'1"	200	4	Bethune-Cookman	D2-03
25	McCadam, Kevin	S	6'1"	219	5	Virginia Tech	FA-Car-07
26	Richardson, David	DB	6'0"	208	3	Cal Poly	FA-04
38	Roberson, Chris	CB	5'11"	185	2	Eastern Michigan	D7-05
43	Sensabaugh, Gerald	S	6'0"	218	2	North Carolina	D5-05
41	Sorensen, Nick	S	6'3"	210	6	Virginia Tech	FA-03
31	Starks, Scott	CB	5'9"	178	2	Wisconsin	D3-05
23	Webb, Dee	CB	5'11"	186	1	Florida	D7b-06
29	Williams, Brian	CB	5'11"	198	5	NC State	FA-Min-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
10	Scobee, Josh	K	6'1"	190	3	Louisiana Tech	D5a-04
88	Zelenka, Joe	LS	6'3"	265	8	Wake Forest	FA-01

Head Coach: Jack Del Rio (34–30, 0–1 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Dirk Koetter
Defensive Coordinator: Mike Smith

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	11	Reggie Williams
WR	18	Matt Jones
LT	69	Khalif Barnes
LG	67	Vince Manuwai
C	63	Brad Meester
RG	65	Chris Naeole
RT	**79**	**Tony Pashos**
TE	87	George Wrighster
QB	7	Byron Leftwich
FB	33	Greg Jones
RB	28	Fred Taylor

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	93	Bobby McCray
DT	99	Marcus Stroud
DT	98	John Henderson
DE	95	Paul Spicer
OLB	52	Daryl Smith
MLB	54	Mike Peterson
OLB	51	Clint Ingram
CB	27	Rashean Mathis
CB	29	Brian Williams
SS	20	Donovin Darius
FS	**42**	**Reggie Nelson**

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	10	Josh Scobee
P	**3**	**Adam Podlesh**

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	9	David Garrard
RB	32	Maurice Jones-Drew
WR	**86**	**Dennis Northcutt**
WR	**81**	**Mike Walker**
DE	97	Reggie Hayward

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Jacksonville Municipal Stadium (67,164) • **Surface:** Grass
www.jaguars.com
Ticket Info: 904-633-6000
Training Camp: Jacksonville Municipal Stadium

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

S	Kevin McCadam (Car)
WR	Dennis Northcutt (Cle)
RT	Tony Pashos (Bal)
TE	Jermaine Wiggins (Min)

Key Losses

TE	Kyle Brady (NE)
S	Deon Grant (Sea)
WR	Cortez Hankton (Min)

2007 Draft

1.	Reggie Nelson	FS	6'0"	193	Florida
2.	Justin Durant	ILB	6'1"	235	Hampton
3.	Mike Walker	WR	6'2"	209	UCF
4.	Adam Podlesh	P	5'11"	202	Maryland
4.	Brian Smith	DE	6'3"	239	Missouri
5.	Uche Nwaneri	G	6'3"	325	Purdue
5.	Josh Gattis	FS	6'1"	213	Wake Forest
5.	Derek Landri	DT	6'2"	277	Notre Dame
7.	John Broussard	WR	6'0"	163	San Jose State
7.	Chad Nkang	ILB	5'11"	220	Elon
7.	Andrew Carnahan	T	6'7"	306	Arizona State

The move they didn't make may turn out to be more significant than any move the Jaguars did make in the offseason. By bypassing Brady Quinn, they may have left themselves without a quarterback for the future because Byron Leftwich is in the final year of his contract and may not want to stay. Their losses weren't significant because they replaced Grant with Nelson, a rookie, and Brady with Wiggins. The newcomers who'll make a difference are Pashos, who will replace Mo Williams at right tackle, and Northcutt and Walker, who are being counted on to add speed to their receiving corps. They'll also have a new punter in Podlesh, the replacement for veteran Chris Hanson, who struggled last year.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
David Garrard	241	145	1,735	10	9
Byron Leftwich	183	108	1,159	7	5
Rushing	**Att.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Fred Taylor	231		1,146	5.0	5
Maurice Jones-Drew	166		941	5.7	13
Receiving	**Rec.**		**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**
Reggie Williams	52		616	11.8	4
Maurice Jones-Drew	46		426	9.5	2
Matt Jones	41		643	15.7	4
George Wrighster	39		353	9.1	3

Kicking: Josh Scobee, 26-32 FGs, 41-41 XPs, 119 points
Tackles: Daryl Smith, 88; Clint Ingram, 71
Sacks: Bobby McCray, 10
Interceptions: Rashean Mathis, 8

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	10	Dallas	W	24–17
Sept.	18	Pittsburgh	W	9– 0
Sept.	24	at Indianapolis	L	14–21
Oct.	1	at Washington (OT)	L	30–36
Oct.	8	N.Y. Jets	W	41– 0
Oct.	22	at Houston	L	7–27
Oct.	29	at Philadelphia	W	13– 6
Nov.	5	Tennessee	W	37– 7
Nov.	12	Houston	L	10–13
Nov.	20	N.Y. Giants	W	26–10
Nov.	26	at Buffalo	L	24–27
Dec.	3	at Miami	W	24–10
Dec.	10	Indianapolis	W	44–17
Dec.	17	at Tennessee	L	17–24
Dec.	24	New England	L	21–24
Dec.	31	at Kansas City	L	30–35

2006 TEAM STATS

	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Offense			
Total Offense	338.9	10	+16.8
Rushing	158.8	3	+41.5
Passing	180.1	24	-24.7
Scoring	23.2	9	+2.5
Punt Returns	8.0	22	-0.7
Kick Returns	23.2	12	+0.7
Red Zone TD %	57.7	6T	+6.9
Defense			
Total Defense	283.6	2	-38.5
Against Rush	91.3	4	-26.0
Against Pass	192.4	10	-12.4
Points Allowed	17.1	4	-3.6
Interceptions	20	6T	+3.7
Sacks	35	15T	-1.3
Turnover Diff.	+1	15T	-

TITANS

When the Titans handed the keys to a rookie quarterback early in the 2006 season, many thought they'd crash and burn. The ones who applauded the move conceded it might be best for the future.

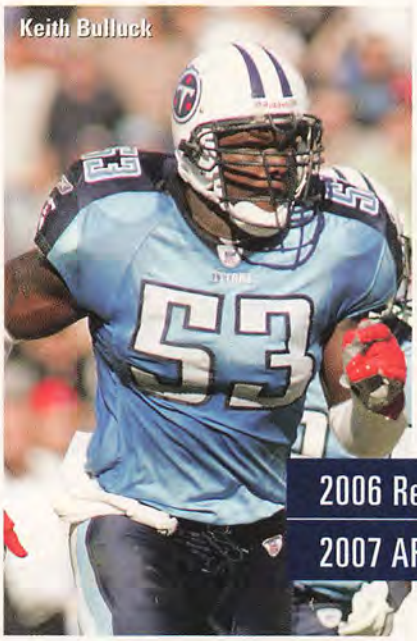
But with Vince Young leading the way, the Titans made things very interesting down the stretch. They won six straight games at one point, and finished one win short of making the playoffs. It was a heartbreaking end to a surprising season, for sure. But 8–8 sure beat 4–12 and 5–11, their marks from the previous two seasons.

Now the challenge is to take the next step behind Young — the NFL's Offensive Rookie of the Year and one of the league's brightest stars. But it won't be easy. The Titans lost many of their top playmakers this offseason, including running back Travis Henry, and their two most productive receivers — Drew Bennett and Bobby Wade. In 2007, younger and less experienced players will be counted on to step up and produce.

Quarterbacks Young won plenty of games in dramatic fashion during his rookie season. The Titans believe Young's low completion percentage (51.5) will improve dramatically as he gets more comfortable in offensive coordinator Norm Chow's offense. In his rookie season, Young misfired on a lot of balls to open receivers. But he made better decisions later in the year, and didn't throw the ball into bad spots nearly as often. The Titans re-signed veteran Kerry Collins during the offseason, and his presence will be key. After starting the first three games of '06, Collins backed up Young and played a key role in his development.

Running Backs As good as Young was, Henry's consistent production in '06 was just as important. He rushed for 1,211 yards, playing through injuries and restoring a tough mentality in the running game. But the team released Henry in March because of salary cap reasons. Now, second-year running back LenDale White has to produce, along with Chris Henry, a rookie from Arizona who the team took with its second-round draft pick. White played sparingly in his rookie season, limited in part because of nagging injuries. He didn't exactly impress the team with his work ethic either, and even more questions were raised when he showed up at the start of the offseason program overweight. But the Titans remain confident White can be a productive back. White will be pushed by Chris Henry, although he has a lot to prove himself. At fullback, the league found out the Titans have a real weapon in Ahmard Hall, a former Marine who established himself as a blocker as well as a capable receiver out of the backfield.

Receivers Replacing Bennett and Wade became the mission after the two players signed with St. Louis and Minnesota, respectively. Veteran David Givens is still recovering from ACL surgery and his availability for the start of the '07 season is in serious doubt. That leaves Brandon Jones as the top receiver. Jones has shown positive signs in his first two seasons, but he's also battled injuries and inconsistencies. Young has as much chemistry with Jones as anyone. Behind Jones, the Titans have several unproven players, including Courtney Roby and Roydell Williams. The Titans added former Bears receiver Justin Gage, who should give Young a big target across the middle. But he has to prove he's more than a No. 3 or 4 receiver. In the draft, the Titans added three more receivers — Fresno State's Paul Williams, Florida State's Chris Davis and Texas Tech's Joel Filani. Davis could make an immediate impact in the slot, and Williams and Filani are big targets Young should enjoy throwing to. The Titans have a pair of athletic tight ends in Ben Troupe and Scaife, who can both run after the catch.


Keith Bulluck

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE TITANS

Tennessee made great strides in 2006, but keeping the momentum going will be tough, even if second-year quarterback Vince Young improves. The Titans simply lost too many quality players in the offseason, including their starting running back and top two receivers. Younger players and less-experienced replacements are being asked to step up and fill the void, which might be a little much to ask. LenDale White must assert himself as an every down back for coach Jeff Fisher's run-first approach to be effective. Brandon Jones could become Young's No. 1 target on the outside, so his expedited development is imperative. While some believe Young officially arrived after an award-filled rookie season, which included a trip to the Pro Bowl, he'll experience more growing pains in his second NFL season. A solid offensive line gives hope that those pains will be kept to a minimum. Any troubles V.Y. experiences will be blamed on the "Madden curse" — since he is the coverboy of the Madden 08 video game this year. The Titans should be better on defense, but the absence of Pacman Jones as a playmaker will be felt more than most would like to admit. Add in a tough schedule and the Titans could have a hard time eclipsing last year's win total of eight. The playoffs are likely at least one more year away.

2006 Record: 8–8

2007 AFC South Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	Indianapolis	1:00 pm
Sept.	24	at New Orleans	8:30 pm
Week	4	BYE	
Oct.	7	Atlanta	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	at Tampa Bay	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Houston	1:00 pm
Oct.	28	Oakland	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	Carolina	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Nov.	19	at Denver	8:30 pm
Nov.	25	at Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	Houston	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	San Diego	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	N.Y. Jets	4:15 pm
Dec.	30	at Indianapolis	1:00 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Young, Bulluck: Tim Clark/ Athlon Sports

Titans QB

Vince Young

Chris Hope

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

New surroundings The Titans play five of the 12 playoff teams from 2006, and two teams will visit LP Field for the first time — San Diego and Carolina. The Titans will also make the first regular-season road trip to Mile High Stadium (Denver) and Arrowhead Stadium (Kansas City) since moving to Tennessee.

Keep on truckin' Following the resignation of Pittsburgh's Bill Cowher, Titans Coach Jeff Fisher will enter the 2007 season with the longest tenure in the NFL. Fisher's 110 career wins put him in 31st place all-time among NFL coaches and 10th among active coaches.

He knows how to win The eight wins posted by Titans quarterback Vince Young in his rookie season marked the fifth-highest total by a rookie quarterback since the 1970 NFL-AFL merger, and he directed a six-game winning streak that was the third-longest for a rookie since the merger.

The tackle machine Titans linebacker Keith Bulluck has 918 career tackles, ranking him third in team history behind Gregg Bingham (1,970) and Robert Brazile (1,281).

Picking up chunks The 4.72-yard rushing average by the Titans was the highest in team history, thanks in part to Young, who ran for 552 yards and a whopping 6.7 yards per carry.

Offensive Linemen The offensive line became a real strength for the Titans in 2006. Left tackle Michael Roos and right tackle David Stewart turned into quite a tandem, albeit with different styles. Roos is the more athletic of the two, while Stewart is more of a mauler. Center Kevin Mawae is the anchor in the middle. The veteran is a stabilizing force for Young and the rest of the line. Guards Benji Olson and Jacob Bell return and they were effective in 2006 as well. Eugene Amano is a proven backup on the interior line, while the team is counting on Seth Wand in a backup role on the outside. The Titans drafted NC State's Leroy Harris, who can play center and guard, along with Purdue tackle Mike Otto.

Defensive Linemen Kyle Vanden Bosch's sack total dipped from 12.5 in '05 to 6.5 last year, but he still played at a high level. The problem for Vanden Bosch and the Titans is they didn't have a consistent threat on the opposite side. Help needs to come from Travis LaBoy and Antwan Odom, who have battled injuries and inconsistencies during their first three NFL seasons. The Titans drafted Central Arkansas' Jacob Ford, who could provide pressure as a speedy pass rusher. In the interior, Albert Haynesworth must be more productive after a suspension-shortened season lessened the impact most thought he would make. Fellow tackles Randy Starks and Rien Long, who returns from an Achilles' injury, will be counted on to fill the vacancy left by Robaire Smith in free agency. Tony Brown provides depth at both end and tackle.

Linebackers Keith Bulluck and David Thornton will man the outside again. Both are athletic playmakers who roam sideline-to-sideline. Bulluck has led the team in tackles five straight seasons, but he's also been key in coverage. Thornton was highly productive in his first year with the Titans, but he'll be asked to give more this fall. In the offseason the Titans added former Cowboy Ryan Fowler, who was signed as a restricted free agent. He and second-year man Stephen Tulloch, who started three games last season, will compete for the middle linebacker position.

Defensive Backs The Titans lost their best cornerback in Pacman Jones, who was suspended for the season by new NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell in April. They signed former Indianapolis cornerback Nick Harper to take his place, with hopes that he can play like he did for the Super Bowl winning Colts. Harper played mostly zone in Indianapolis, and he'll be asked to do a number of things with his new team. He's a physical player who could be used in more blitz situations. Third-year cornerback Reynaldo Hill had a solid season in 2006, while Cortland Finnegan was a pleasant surprise as a rookie at nickel back. Former first-round pick Andre Woolfolk provides depth for the time being, but he'll need a good camp. At strong safety, Chris Hope made a number of big plays in '06 and led the team in interceptions. The team's free safety, Lamont Thompson, will have competition in training camp from Calvin Lowry, Vincent Fuller, Donnie Nickey and newcomer Bryan Scott. The Titans used their first round pick on a jack-of-all-trades in Texas safety Michael Griffin, who is capable of playing either safety or cornerback. Griffin is also a demon on special teams and should make an immediate impact.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Vince Young, QB
No one questions his running prowess, but a few more aerial scores and he might be a fantasy starter.
Brandon Jones, WR
Slowed last year while recovering from ACL injury but has an opportunity with receiver positions wide open.

WIN your fantasy league: Get the Athlon Sports Fantasy Football Analyst magazine and subscribe online at athlonsports.com/fantasy

Specialists Who will take Pacman's place? No one knows for sure. Brandon Jones or Roby could provide the answer, although Finnegan might also get a shot as a punt returner. Davis, the rookie from Florida State, will be thrown into the mix as well. Kicker Rob Bironas proved himself on many levels in '06, making one clutch kick after the next, including a game-winning 60-yarder vs. the Colts. But in making 22-of-28, Bironas also missed a few short ones. Punter Craig Hentrich was effective in his 13th NFL season and can still play at a high level.

Coaching Staff Head coach Jeff Fisher returns and his plan is to establish a running game that will once again take the pressure off his young quarterback. Chow built offensive game plans each week last year designed to take advantage of Young's strengths, but he'll put even more on his quarterback's plate this fall. With a more experienced unit, defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz would like to be more aggressive in '07 — with more blitz packages and more pressure on opposing quarterbacks.

Jones, Hope: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
5	Collins, Kerry	QB	6'5"	245	12	Penn State	FA-Oak-06
8	Mauck, Matt	QB	6'2"	220	2	LSU	FA-05
	Rattay, Tim	QB	6'0"	200	8	Louisiana Tech	FA-TB-07
10	Young, Vince	QB	6'4"	233	1	Texas	D1-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
29	Brown, Chris	RB	6'3"	220	4	Colorado	D3-03
35	Ganther, Quinton	RB	5'9"	214	1	Utah	D7c-06
45	Hall, Ahmard	FB	5'11"	235	1	Texas	FA-06
25	White, LenDale	RB	6'1"	235	1	USC	D2-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
48	Cramer, Casey	TE	6'2"	250	2	Dartmouth	W-Car-06
12	Gage, Justin	WR	6'4"	212	4	Missouri	FA-Chi-07
87	Givens, David	WR	6'0"	215	5	Notre Dame	FA-NE-06
88	Hartsock, Ben	TE	6'4"	255	3	Ohio State	W-Ind-06
81	Jones, Brandon	WR	6'1"	212	2	Oklahoma	D3b-05
85	Orr, Jonathan	WR	6'1"	193	1	Wisconsin	D6-06
82	Roby, Courtney	WR	6'0"	189	2	Indiana	D3a-05
18	Ross, Richie	WR	6'4"	208	1	Nebraska-Kearney	FA-06
80	Scaife, Bo	TE	6'3"	249	2	Texas	D6-05
84	Troupe, Ben	TE	6'4"	270	3	Florida	D2-04
89	Wallace, Cooper	TE	6'3"	258	1	Auburn	FA-06
86	Williams, Roydell	WR	6'0"	187	2	Tulane	D4c-05
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
54	Amano, Eugene	C	6'3"	310	3	SE Missouri State	D7-04
60	Bell, Jacob	G/T	6'4"	295	3	Miami (Ohio)	D5-04
73	Geisinger, Justin	C/G	6'3"	322	2	Vanderbilt	FA-06
70	Loper, Daniel	T	6'6"	320	2	Texas Tech	D5b-05
68	Mawae, Kevin	C	6'4"	289	13	LSU	FA-NYJ-06
75	Olson, Benji	G	6'4"	320	9	Washington	D5-98
71	Roos, Michael	T	6'7"	315	2	Eastern Washington	D2-05
72	Snell, Isaac	G	6'6"	288	1	North Dakota State	FA-06
76	Stewart, David	T	6'7"	318	2	Mississippi State	D4b-05
64	Wand, Seth	T	6'7"	327	4	NW Missouri State	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Brown, Tony	DT/DE	6'1"	285	2	Memphis	FA-06
77	Conover, Sean	DE	6'5"	262	1	Bucknell	FA-06
92	Haynesworth, Albert	DT	6'6"	320	5	Tennessee	D1-02
91	LaBoy, Travis	DE	6'3"	260	3	Hawaii	D2-04
99	Long, Rien	DT	6'6"	300	4	Washington State	D4-03
94	Mahelona, Jesse	DT	6'0"	311	1	Tennessee	D5b-06
98	Odom, Antwan	DE	6'4"	274	3	Alabama	D2-04
95	Savage, Josh	DE	6'4"	276	2	Utah	W-Atl-06
90	Starks, Randy	DT	6'3"	312	3	Maryland	D3-04
93	Vanden Bosch, Kyle	DE	6'4"	278	6	Nebraska	FA-Ari-05
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
53	Bulluck, Keith	LB	6'3"	235	7	Syracuse	D1-00
52	Fowler, Ryan	LB	6'3"	250	3	Duke	FA-Dal-07
	Gardner, Gilbert	LB	6'1"	228	3	Purdue	FA-Ind-07
57	Nande, Terna	LB	6'0"	230	1	Miami (Ohio)	D5a-06
51	Reynolds, Robert	LB	6'3"	247	3	Ohio State	D5-04
50	Thornton, David	LB	6'2"	225	5	North Carolina	FA-Ind-06
49	Toone, Spencer	LB	6'2"	240	1	Utah	D7b-06
55	Tulloch, Stephen	LB	5'11"	235	1	NC State	D4b-06
49	Woods, LeVar	LB	6'2"	241	6	Iowa	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
31	Finnegan, Cortland	CB	5'10"	188	1	Samford	D7a-06
22	Fuller, Vincent	S	6'1"	190	2	Virginia Tech	D4a-05
20	Harper, Nick	CB	5'10"	182	6	Fort Valley State	FA-Ind-07
41	Harris, Antoine	CB	5'10"	190	1	Louisville	FA-05
21	Hill, Reynaldo	CB	5'11"	185	2	Florida	D7-05
24	Hope, Chris	S	5'11"	206	5	Florida State	FA-Pit-06
32	Jones, Pacman	CB	5'10"	185	2	West Virginia	D1-05
30	King, Eric	CB	5'10"	185	2	Wake Forest	W-Buf-06
37	Lowry, Calvin	S	5'11"	200	1	Penn State	D4a-06
23	Nickey, Donnie	S	6'3"	210	4	Ohio State	D5-03
38	Scott, Bryan	S	6'1"	219	4	Penn State	FA-NO-07
28	Thompson, Lamont	S	6'1"	215	5	Washington State	FA-03
36	Waddell, Michael	CB	5'10"	180	3	North Carolina	D4-04
26	Woolfolk, Andre	CB	6'2"	197	4	Oklahoma	D1-03
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
58	Amato, Ken	LS	6'2"	245	4	Montana State	FA-03
2	Bironas, Rob	K	6'0"	205	2	Georgia Southern	FA-05
15	Hentrich, Craig	P/K	6'3"	213	13	Notre Dame	FA-GB-98

Head Coach: Jeff Fisher (105–93, 5–4 Playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Norm Chow
Defensive Coordinator: Jim Schwartz

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	87	David Givens
WR	81	Brandon Jones
LT	71	Michael Roos
LG	60	Jacob Bell
C	68	Kevin Mawae
RG	75	Benji Olson
RT	76	David Stewart
TE	84	Ben Troupe
QB	10	Vince Young
FB	45	Ahmard Hall
RB	25	LenDale White

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	91	Travis LaBoy
DT	90	Randy Starks
DT	92	Albert Haynesworth
DE	93	Kyle Vanden Bosch
OLB	50	David Thornton
MLB	**52**	**Ryan Fowler**
OLB	53	Keith Bulluck
CB	21	Reynaldo Hill
CB	**20**	**Nick Harper**
SS	24	Chris Hope
FS	28	Lamont Thompson

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	2	Rob Bironas
P	15	Craig Hentrich

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	5	Kerry Collins
OL	54	Eugene Amano
TE	80	Bo Scaife
DE	98	Antwan Odom
DB		**Michael Griffin**

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: LP Field (68,798)
Surface: Grass
www.titansonline.com
Ticket Info: 615-565-4200
Training Camp: Baptist Sports Park

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

LB	Ryan Fowler (Dal)
WR	Justin Gage (Chi)
CB	Nick Harper(Ind)
S	Bryan Scott (NO)

Key Losses

WR	Drew Bennett (StL)
RB	Travis Henry (Den)
CB	Pacman Jones (Susp.)
G	Zach Piller (Det)
DT	Robaire Smith (Cle)
WR	Bobby Wade (Min)

2007 Draft

1.	Michael Griffin	FS	6'0"	195	Texas
2.	Chris Henry	RB	6'0"	228	Arizona
3.	Paul Williams	WR	6'1"	209	Fresno State
4.	Leroy Harris	C	6'2"	298	NC State
4.	Chris Davis	WR	5'10"	181	Florida State
5.	Antonio Johnson	DT	6'3"	305	Mississippi State
6.	Joel Filani	WR	6'2"	216	Texas Tech
6.	Jacob Ford	DE	6'4"	249	Central Arkansas
6.	Ryan Smith	CB	5'10"	168	Florida
7.	Michael Otto	T	6'5"	308	Purdue

The Titans not only lost productive players during the offseason, they lost team leaders who were good in the locker room. Replacing them will be difficult in both areas. The draft picks and the emergence of some of the receivers in-house should help make up for the production of Bennett and Wade, but the backfield is where the team has its biggest question marks. The Titans want to establish the running game to take the pressure off Young, and Henry did just that last season. White and Chris Henry are both unproven and must produce for the team to be successful. If they're not, Young — and the Titans — are doomed. Harper won't bring the playmaking ability of Jones to the defense, but he'll be a solid player. The Titans believe Davis can be a weapon not only on special teams, but in the offense, as well.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Vince Young	357	184	2,199	12	13
Kerry Collins	90	42	549	1	6
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Travis Henry*	270	1,211	4.5	7	
Vince Young	83	552	6.7	7	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Drew Bennett*	46	737	16.0	3	
Bobby Wade*	33	461	14.0	2	
Bo Scaife	29	370	12.8	2	

Kicking: Rob Bironas, 22-28 FGs, 32-32 XPs, 98 points
Tackles: Keith Bulluck, 143; Chris Hope, 121
Sacks: Kyle Vanden Bosch, 6.5
Interceptions: Chris Hope, 5
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (8–8)

Sept.	10	N.Y. Jets	L	16–23
Sept.	17	at San Diego	L	7–40
Sept.	24	at Miami	L	10–13
Oct.	1	Dallas	L	14–45
Oct.	8	at Indianapolis	L	13–14
Oct.	15	at Washington	W	25–22
Oct.	29	Houston	W	28–22
Nov.	5	at Jacksonville	L	7–37
Nov.	12	Baltimore	L	26–27
Nov.	19	at Philadelphia	W	31–13
Nov.	26	N.Y. Giants	W	24–21
Dec.	3	Indianapolis	W	20–17
Dec.	10	at Houston (OT)	W	26–20
Dec.	17	Jacksonville	W	24–17
Dec.	24	at Buffalo	W	30–29
Dec.	31	New England	L	23–40

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	300.6	27	-21.5
Rushing	138.4	5	+21.1
Passing	162.3	30	-42.5
Scoring	20.2	16	-0.5
Punt Returns	12.6	1	+3.9
Kick Returns	23.2	11	+0.7
Red Zone TD %	44.7	23	-6.1
Defense			
Total Defense	369.7	32	+47.6
Against Rush	144.6	30	+27.3
Against Pass	225.1	27	+20.3
Points Allowed	25.0	31	+4.3
Interceptions	17	13T	+0.7
Sacks	26	29	-10.3
Turnover Diff.	+2	13T	-

BRONCOS

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE BRONCOS

After an extreme makeover, mile-high style, the Broncos believe they have what it takes to contend again in the wild AFC West. Quarterback Jay Cutler has had a full offseason to grasp Denver's complicated offense, and he has a few more targets in tight end Daniel Graham and wide receiver Brandon Stokley, plus a new running back (Travis Henry) to help carry the load. "To not be in the top five is embarrassing and it's the standard we shoot for. I'll be very disappointed if we're not back to where we've been," coach Mike Shanahan says of an offense that finished 21st in 2006. On defense, Denver is hoping to reverse the slide that saw it start the season as the first team in 64 years to not allow a touchdown over the first 11 quarters, only to give up 27 in the final 10 games. Shanahan's counting on a new defensive staff, a second Pro Bowl corner (Dre' Bly) and a youth movement up front, as well as inspired play by a team still mourning the loss of cornerback Darrent Williams to a tragic New Year's Day shooting. A front-loaded schedule, with five of the team's first seven games at home, should help Denver get off to a good start (though the Broncos were just 4–4 at home in '06). But there are also road games at Chicago and Indianapolis to test the team's mettle in Weeks 4 and 12.

2006 Record: 9–7

2007 AFC West Prediction: 2nd

After an offseason marked by tragedy and turmoil, the Denver Broncos have, little by little, begun putting the pieces back together. Yet even after myriad moves, trades, and draft-day decisions, there remain as many unanswered questions about the team's prospects as there are about the senseless gang-related New Year's Day murder of starting cornerback Darrent Williams.

How will wide receiver Javon Walker, who enjoyed an eye-opening first season with the Broncos, deal with the death of Williams, who died in his arms after a barrage of bullets raked the white Hummer limousine?

How will a once-proud defense mesh after the Broncos cut out its heart and soul, linebacker Al Wilson, whose high salary and bad neck made him expendable?

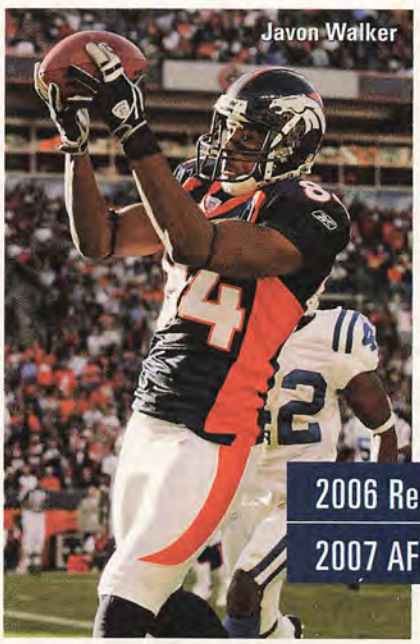
And how much will the addition of three playmakers on offense boost Jay Cutler's confidence in his first full season as starting quarterback? After a disappointing 9–7 finish in 2006, most everyone expected change. But head coach Mike Shanahan went with a major overhaul. He fired much of his defensive staff, sent top running back Tatum Bell packing, pushed quarterback Jake "The Snake" Plummer into retirement and began a youth movement along the defensive line.

What is clear, as team owner Pat Bowlen said after missing the playoffs, "What happened last year wasn't acceptable."

Quarterbacks The future came into view in early December when rookie Cutler took over permanently for the ineffective Plummer. Cutler made mistakes, and plenty of them, but he also showed glimpses of what can be. Against division champ San Diego, he overcame a rough start to connect on 10-of-14 passes for 137 yards and two touchdowns in the third quarter, cementing his role as new offensive leader. The free-spirited Plummer, unwilling to be a backup in Denver, chose to retire rather than accept a trade to Tampa Bay. That pushed the Broncos to sign former Redskins starter Patrick Ramsey as backup, another indication that this is Cutler's team.

Running Backs For the fourth straight year, the Broncos dumped their leading rusher in favor of some fresher legs. This time they traded Tatum Bell (1,025 yards, 4.4 avg) to Detroit as part of a deal for Pro Bowl corner Dre' Bly. Replacing Bell as starter will be former Titan Travis Henry, who Shanahan hopes will run with authority and close out games, something Bell could not. Henry averaged 4.7 yards a carry over the last 12 games in 2006 in helping Tennessee turn its season around. Denver's other Bell, second-year pro Mike Bell, will contend for carries, as will Cecil Sapp. But the Broncos hope is that with Henry, they'll get away from the back-by-committee approach. Kyle Johnson returns as starting fullback.

Receivers For the second straight offseason, the Broncos were busy upgrading here, adding two players with postseason experience in wide receiver Brandon Stokley and tight end Daniel Graham. Between them they have 319 career catches, 39 TDs and four Super Bowl rings. A year earlier,


Javon Walker

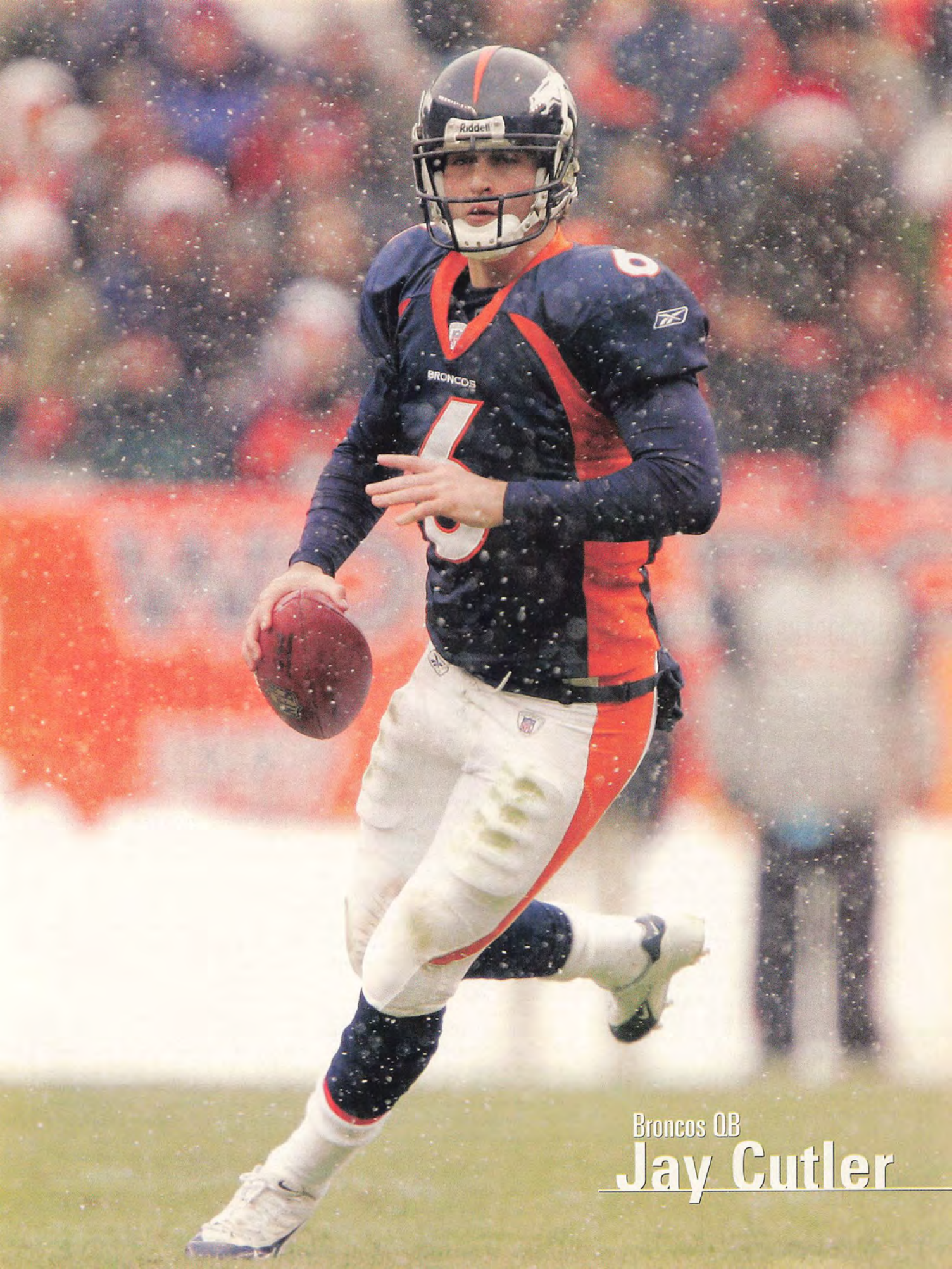
Denver added Walker, who returned from a severe knee injury to become the big-play receiver the Broncos craved (69 catches, 1,084 yards, 8 receiving TDs). While Walker has proven the knee and hands are just fine, his mind will be tested this year as he copes with the death of Williams. Ditto for Denver's other big receiver, 6'4" Brandon Marshall, who was in the same Hummer limo as Williams and Walker, and also was with reserve back Damien Nash in his final minutes before he collapsed and died after playing in a charity basketball game in February. (Marshall also dealt with an offseason domestic violence charge). If Marshall comes back strong, he'll battle for the No. 2 job after a 20-catch rookie season. He'll have to fight captain Rod Smith tooth and nail all the way, even if Smith is coming

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Buffalo	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	Oakland	4:15 pm
Sept.	23	Jacksonville	4:05 pm
Sept.	30	at Indianapolis	4:15 pm
Oct.	7	San Diego	4:15 pm
Week 6		BYE	
Oct.	21	Pittsburgh	8:15 pm
Oct.	29	Green Bay	8:30 pm
Nov.	4	at Detroit	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Nov.	19	Tennessee	8:30 pm
Nov.	25	at Chicago	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	at Oakland	4:05 pm
Dec.	9	Kansas City	4:15 pm
Dec.	13	at Houston	8:15 pm
Dec.	24	at San Diego	8:00 pm
Dec.	30	Minnesota	4:15 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Walker, Cutler: Brian Barr/Getty Images



Broncos QB

Jay Cutler

Champ Bailey

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Tough moments Team owner Pat Bowlen, who dealt with his mother's death late last season, attended two more funerals in the offseason. The first was for cornerback Darrent Williams, killed in the early-morning hours New Year's Day in a drive-by shooting. The second was for backup running back Damien Nash, who collapsed and died after a charity basketball game in February. Both were just 24 years old. Bowlen said for a time he just wanted to crawl in a hole somewhere as he dealt with the tragedy. Wide receiver Brandon Marshall was with both Williams and Nash in the final minutes before they died.

What happened? The Broncos allowed only two touchdowns through their first six games but allowed 27 the final 10.

No passing fancy Jay Cutler became the first rookie in NFL history to throw multiple touchdown passes in each of his first four games. He also posted the third-highest TD-to-INT ratio (1.8) among rookies since 1970.

Cashing in The Broncos were the only team in the NFL to come away with points in every goal-to-go situation in 2006 (26).

Clean living The Broncos finished the season as the NFL's least-penalized team (67 for 478 yards) — the fewest in club history for a 16-game season.

off hip surgery. The hardworking veteran, who turned 37 on May 15, showed signs of aging last year (9.8-yard average on 52 receptions, and a long gain of 20 yards). Graham gives Cutler another big target, if second-year pro Tony Scheffler doesn't develop as expected.

Offensive Linemen Matt Lepsis returns from a knee injury and should be back at left tackle. Center Tom Nalen returns for his 14th season and left guard Ben Hamilton is back for his seventh. There is more uncertainty on the right side. Former first-round pick George Foster was jettisoned to Detroit, but he had already lost his tackle job to Adam Meadows. With Cooper Carlisle signing a free agent contract with rival Oakland, the Broncos also have a hole to fill at right guard. Second-year pro Chris Kuper is the likely successor, though the Broncos added line depth by drafting Notre Dame's Ryan Harris, who got a taste of a pro-style offense under Charlie Weis. However it shakes out, the line will need to do a better job of pass protecting.

Defensive Linemen The youth movement has arrived, but is it a year too late? The Broncos hoped their group of ex-Brownies could carry the load up front, but the pass rush fizzled late in the season. It's the main reason the Broncos used three of their four draft picks this year on defensive linemen: Jarvis Moss (17th overall), Tim Crowder (56th overall) and Marcus Thomas (121st overall). The question is whether any of them can step in and have a major impact right away. Former All-Pro Trevor Pryce (28th overall, 1997) couldn't do so nine years ago, but he was joining a championship team. Gerard Warren remains the primary run stopper up front and will be joined at tackle by another former Brown, Alvin McKinley. While Kenard Lang, 32, and Ebenezer Ekuban are penciled in as starters at defensive end, Moss and Crowder could push for playing time as Elvis Dumervil (8.5 sacks as a rookie) did last year. If Thomas, who was kicked off Florida's national championship team for failed drug tests and other violations, can stay clean, he could be the best of the bunch.

Linebackers A neck injury slowed middle linebacker Wilson late in the season, and the Broncos ultimately released their fiery leader in April after being unable to trade him. That leaves a huge hole in the middle, one that Nate Webster is left to fill. The other option is to move strong-side linebacker D.J. Williams inside. The fleet-footed Ian Gold returns as the starting weak-side backer.

Defensive Backs No one can replace the spirit of Williams, whose playful demeanor and football skills made him a team and fan favorite. But Dre' Bly certainly has the credentials to fill his roster spot. The two-time Pro Bowler will start opposite All-Pro Champ Bailey, giving the Broncos arguably the most formidable tandem in the league. Together they have 72 career interceptions. The acquisition of Bly also keeps the pressure off Domonique Foxworth, a close friend of Williams' who now can continue to develop his skills as Denver's nickel back. At safety, the Broncos have veteran savvy if not speed with John Lynch and Nick Ferguson returning. Lynch remains the big hitter and a threat to blitz, while Ferguson returns from a left knee injury.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Travis Henry, RB
Broncos expect to abandon the two-back system and go mostly with Henry, a veteran workhorse.

Jay Cutler, QB
May be under-appreciated in some fantasy circles, but 9 TD passes in five games last season was impressive.

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Specialists Jason Elam set a franchise record for field goal accuracy in a season (27-of-29, 93.1 percent) and returns for his 15th season. The Broncos also re-signed 2005 punter Todd Sauerbrun, who was dumped in 2006 after being suspended four games for using ephedra. Sauerbrun also has the leg to be Denver's kickoff specialist. The in-house candidates to replace the late Williams at punt returner are Marshall and second-year receiver Domenik Hixon, who missed his rookie year because of a broken leg.

Coaching Staff Shanahan received a three-year contract extension that continues to make him one of the highest-paid coaches in the NFL. But first he shook up his staff like never before. He fired defensive coordinator Larry Coyer, defensive line coach Andre Patterson and linebackers coach Kirk Doll, and re-assigned receivers coach Steve Watson (to assistant head coach), Pat McPherson (from quarterbacks coach to tight ends), Ronnie Bradford (from special teams to defensive backs) and Jeremy Bates (from offensive assistant to receivers/QB coach). Former Miami and Green Bay defensive coordinator Jim Bates takes over as assistant head coach/defense, while Joe Baker (linebackers), Bill Johnson (defensive line) and Scott O'Brien (special teams) also were added to the staff.

Bailey: Byron Hetzler/US Presswire; Henry: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
6	Cutler, Jay	QB	6'3"	233	1	Vanderbilt	D1-06
5	Parsons, Preston	QB	6'4"	235	3	Northern Arizona	FA-06
11	Ramsey, Patrick	QB	6'2"	225	5	Tulane	FA-NYJ-07
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
30	Bell, Mike	RB	6'0"	220	1	Arizona	FA-06
33	Belton, Keith	FB	6'0"	232	3	Syracuse	FA-06
34	Cobbs, Cedric	RB	6'0"	227	2	Arkansas	FA-05
23	Hall, Andre	RB	5'10"	205	1	South Florida	FA-06
20	Henry, Travis	RB	5'9"	215	6	Tennessee	FA-Ten-07
39	Johnson, Kyle	FB	6'0"	242	4	Syracuse	FA-03
37	Sapp, Cecil	RB	5'11"	229	4	Colorado State	FA-03
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
82	Alexander, Stephen	TE	6'4"	250	9	Oklahoma	FA-Det-05
19	Clark, Brian	WR	6'2"	204	1	NC State	FA-06
89	Graham, Daniel	TE	6'3"	257	5	Colorado	FA-NE-07
12	Hixon, Domenik	WR	6'2"	185	1	Akron	D4c-06
81	Jackson, Nate	TE	6'3"	235	4	Menlo	T-SF-03
87	Kircus, David	WR	6'2"	192	3	Grand Valley State	FA-06
15	Marshall, Brandon	WR	6'4"	222	1	UCF	D4a-06
11	Morgan, Quincy	WR	6'1"	215	6	Kansas State	FA-06
85	Mustard, Chad	TE	6'6"	277	3	North Dakota	FA-06
88	Scheffler, Tony	TE	6'5"	250	1	Western Michigan	D2-06
80	Smith, Rod	WR	6'0"	200	12	Missouri Southern	FA-94
14	Stokley, Brandon	WR	5'11"	197	8	UL Lafayette	FA-Ind-07
86	Trusty, Landon	TE	6'7"	266	2	Central Arkansas	FA-06
84	Walker, Javon	WR	6'3"	209	5	Florida State	T-GB-06
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
67	Eslinger, Greg	C	6'3"	290	1	Minnesota	D6-06
50	Hamilton, Ben	G/C	6'4"	283	6	Minnesota	D4a-01
61	Holland, Montrae	G	6'2"	322	4	Florida State	FA-NO-07
63	Hunt, Rob	G/C	6'3"	283	1	North Dakota State	FA-05
73	Kuper, Chris	G	6'4"	302	1	North Dakota	D5-06
78	Lepsis, Matt	T	6'4"	290	10	Colorado	FA-97
75	Meadows, Adam	T	6'5"	290	8	Georgia	FA-06
62	Myers, Chris	C/G	6'4"	300	2	Miami	D6-05
66	Nalen, Tom	C	6'3"	286	13	Boston College	D7c-94
71	Nienhuis, Doug	T	6'6"	307	2	Oregon State	FA-06
64	Pears, Erik	T	6'8"	305	1	Colorado State	FA-05
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
93	Burton, Antwon	DT	6'2"	318	1	Temple	FA-06
92	Dumervil, Elvis	DL	5'11"	250	1	Louisville	D4b-06
91	Ekuban, Ebenezer	DE	6'4"	275	8	North Carolina	T-Cle-05
60	Engelberger, John	DE	6'4"	252	7	Virginia Tech	T-SF-05
94	Gordon, Amon	DL	6'2"	305	3	Stanford	W-Cle-06
76	Lang, Kenard	DE	6'3"	264	10	Miami	FA-06
99	McKinley, Alvin	DT	6'3"	294	7	Mississippi State	FA-Cle-07
90	Peterson, Kenny	DE	6'3"	285	4	Ohio State	FA-06
97	Veal, Demetrin	DT	6'2"	288	4	Tennessee	FA-04
61	Warren, Gerard	DT	6'4"	325	6	Florida	T-Cle-05
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
51	Burns, Keith	LB	6'2"	235	13	Oklahoma State	FA-TB-05
52	Gold, Ian	LB	6'0"	223	7	Michigan	FA-05
53	Green, Louis	LB	6'3"	228	3	Alcorn State	FA-03
	Holdman, Warrick	LB	6'1"	235	9	Texas A&M	FA-Was-07
	Lewis, D.D.	LB	6'1"	241	4	Texas	FA-Sea-07
59	Vaughn, Cameron	LB	6'4"	241	1	LSU	FA-06
58	Webster, Nate	LB	6'0"	237	7	Miami	FA-Cin-06
55	Williams, D.J.	LB	6'1"	242	3	Miami	D1-04
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
21	Abdullah, Hamza	S	6'2"	216	2	Washington State	PS-TB-05
24	Bailey, Champ	CB	6'0"	192	8	Georgia	T-Was-04
32	Bly, Dre'	CB	5'10"	188	8	North Carolina	T-Det-07
42	Brandon, Sam	S	6'2"	200	5	UNLV	D4-02
38	Cargile, Steve	S	6'2"	210	2	Columbia	FA-06
40	Cox, Curome	S	6'1"	204	2	Maryland	FA-04
25	Ferguson, Nick	S	5'11"	201	7	Georgia Tech	FA-03
22	Foxworth, Domonique	CB	5'11"	180	2	Maryland	D3b-05
31	Harris, Quentin	S	6'1"	213	5	Syracuse	FA-06
47	Lynch, John	S	6'2"	220	14	Stanford	FA-04
41	Paymah, Karl	CB	6'0"	200	2	Washington State	D3a-05
28	Shoate, Jeff	CB	5'10"	180	3	San Diego State	D5-04
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
1	Elam, Jason	K	5'11"	200	14	Hawaii	D3b-93
3	Ernster, Paul	P/K	6'0"	217	2	Northern Arizona	D7-05
83	Leach, Mike	LS	6'2"	245	7	William & Mary	FA-02
10	Sauerbrun, Todd	P	5'10"	215	12	West Virginia	FA-NE-07

Head Coach: Mike Shanahan (131–81, 8–5 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Rick Dennison
Defensive Coordinator: Bob Slowik

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	80	Rod Smith
WR	84	Javon Walker
LT	78	Matt Lepsis
LG	50	Ben Hamilton
C	66	Tom Nalen
RG	73	Chris Kuper
RT	75	Adam Meadows
TE	**89**	**Daniel Graham**
QB	6	Jay Cutler
FB	39	Kyle Johnson
RB	**20**	**Travis Henry**

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	76	Kenard Lang
DT	**99**	**Alvin McKinley**
DT	61	Gerard Warren
DE	91	Ebenezer Ekuban
SLB	55	D.J. Williams
MLB	58	Nate Webster
WLB	52	Ian Gold
CB	24	Champ Bailey
CB	**32**	**Dre' Bly**
SS	25	Nick Ferguson
FS	47	John Lynch

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	1	Jason Elam
P	**10**	**Todd Sauerbrun**

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**11**	**Patrick Ramsey**
RB	30	Mike Bell
WR	**14**	**Brandon Stokley**
DE	92	Elvis Dumervil
CB	22	Domonique Foxworth

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: INVESCO Field at Mile High (76,125) **Surface:** Grass
www.denverbroncos.com
Ticket Info: 720-258-3333
Training Camp: Bowlen Centre (Englewood, Co.)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key additions

CB	Dre' Bly (Det)
TE	Daniel Graham (NE)
RB	Travis Henry (Ten)
DT	Alvin McKinley (Cle)
QB	Patrick Ramsey (NYJ)
P	Todd Sauerbrun (FA)
WR	Brandon Stokley (Ind)

Key losses

RB	Tatum Bell (Det)
G	Cooper Carlisle (Oak)
T	George Foster (Det)
DT	Michael Myers (Cin)
RB	Damien Nash (Deceased)
QB	Jake Plummer (Retired)
CB	Darrent Williams (Deceased)
LB	Al Wilson (FA)

2007 Draft

1.	Jarvis Moss	DE	6'6"	251	Florida
2.	Tim Crowder	DE	6'4"	271	Texas
3.	Ryan Harris	OL	6'5"	299	Notre Dame
4.	Marcus Thomas	DT	6'3"	296	Florida

The Broncos had arguably their busiest free agency period in years. But the first offseason move was the biggest, as Bly was added to replace the murdered Williams at cornerback. Bly steps in immediately to give the Broncos an impressive cornerback tandem. The Broncos failed to land any top-tier defensive lineman, a big need at the end of last season. They addressed that head-on in the draft, even moving up to get Moss, who has the quickness and speed to play in the NFL but needs to add more strength. At wide receiver, Denver took a pass on controversial Randy Moss and signed Stokley. If he recovers from a ruptured Achilles' tendon, he could be the solid No. 3 receiver the Broncos need. Two other offensive moves should help take some of the pressure off young quarterback Jay Cutler, with Graham, a playmaking tight end, returning to Colorado where he played college ball and Henry added to be Denver's feature back.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Jake Plummer*	317	175	1,994	11	13
Jay Cutler	137	81	1,001	9	5
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Tatum Bell*	233	1,025	4.4		2
Mike Bell	157	677	4.3		8
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**		**TD**
Javon Walker	69	1,084	15.7		8
Rod Smith	52	512	9.8		3
Brandon Marshall	20	309	15.5		2

Kicking: Jason Elam, 27-29 FGs, 34-34 XPs, 115 points
Tackles: Al Wilson,* 101; Ian Gold, 90
Sacks: Elvis Dumervil, 8.5
Interceptions: Champ Bailey, 10
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (9–7)

Sept.	10	at St. Louis	L	10–18
Sept.	17	Kansas City (OT)	W	9– 6
Sept.	24	at New England	W	17– 7
Oct.	9	Baltimore	W	13– 3
Oct.	15	Oakland	W	13– 3
Oct.	22	at Cleveland	W	17– 7
Oct.	29	Indianapolis	L	31–34
Nov.	5	at Pittsburgh	W	31–20
Nov.	12	at Oakland	W	17–13
Nov.	19	San Diego	L	27–35
Nov.	23	at Kansas City	L	10–19
Dec.	3	Seattle	L	20–23
Dec.	10	at San Diego	L	20–48
Dec.	17	at Arizona	W	37–20
Dec.	24	Cincinnati	W	24–23
Dec.	31	San Francisco (OT)	L	23–26

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	309.4	21	-12.7
Rushing	134.5	8	+17.2
Passing	174.9	25	-29.9
Scoring	19.9	17	-0.8
Punt Returns	9.2	12	+0.5
Kick Returns	22.0	23	-0.5
Red Zone TD %	54.5	12	+3.7
Defense			
Total Defense	326.4	14	+4.3
Against Rush	113.3	12	-4.0
Against Pass	213.1	21	+8.3
Points Allowed	19.1	8T	-1.6
Interceptions	17	13T	+0.7
Sacks	35	15T	-1.3
Turnover Diff.	0	17T	-

CHIEFS

Don't look to Kansas City for offensive firepower anymore. When you think of the Chiefs, think of defense. That started to become evident last season, when new coach Herm Edwards pulled in the reins on one of the NFL's most exciting offenses while improving one of the league's worst defenses.

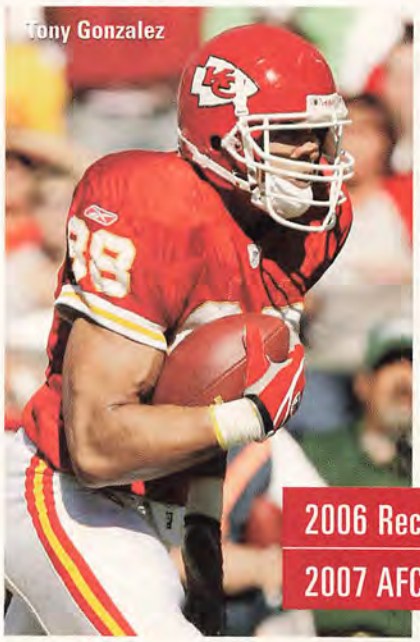
It will be more evident this season. The Chiefs bolstered their defense by signing tackle Alfonso Boone and linebackers Napoleon Harris and Donnie Edwards. They also have high hopes for two of their top draft picks, second-round end Turk McBride and third-round tackle Tank Tyler.

Meanwhile, for the first time in a decade, the Chiefs have an unsettled situation at quarterback, which should translate — at least early in the season — to uncertainty on offense. Young Brodie Croyle will be given every chance to win the starting spot ahead of veteran Damon Huard.

The Chiefs made defensive improvements last season and that should continue again. But the defense isn't strong enough to carry the team by itself. Whether the Chiefs can challenge for the AFC West title or earn a second straight wild card berth depends on how fast the offense can get up to speed.

Quarterbacks Edwards would like to resolve the situation not only this season but for many to come, which is what would happen if Croyle were to earn the spot. If the Chiefs are forced to go with Huard, the long-term picture is still up in the air. The Chiefs would eventually have to turn to Croyle or another young quarterback. In the short-term, Huard would provide more stability. He filled in nicely for an injured Trent Green last season and played the position like Edwards and offensive coordinator Mike Solari want it played. Croyle has more upside than Huard. He is able to make all of the necessary throws and has a lot of the intangible qualities teams look for in a starting quarterback. But the Chiefs will undoubtedly experience the inevitable growing pains if Croyle is their starter. He missed a lot of valuable practice time during training camp and the preseason last year because of an injured shoulder, so his development was delayed.

Running Backs Don't look for Larry Johnson to have as busy a season as last year, when he set an NFL record for carries with 416. While Johnson remains the focus of the power running game, the Chiefs would like to reduce his burden. Similar plans to rest Johnson were in place last season, yet they were addicted to him. But this year, they go to training camp with a proven alternative in veteran Michael Bennett. Bennett joined the club last year during camp, but injuries limited his contributions. When he was healthy, the Chiefs never appeared comfortable with his abilities. But they've had a full offseason to integrate Bennett into the system, so there are no excuses for him not to produce. The Chiefs have no established fullback, which isn't a huge void because they use the position only about 25 percent of the snaps. Newly converted linebacker Boomer Grigsby is first in line for that job.


Tony Gonzalez

Receivers Tight end Tony Gonzalez is 31 but shows no signs of declining skills. His numbers were down slightly last season, but that's more of a reflection on problems in pass protection and at quarterback than on Gonzalez. Look for him to have another big season and lead the Chiefs in receiving again. Wide receiver Dwayne Bowe from LSU was the first-round draft choice and should energize the position. Look for Bowe to receive plenty of playing time as a rookie and perhaps even join Eddie Kennison in the starting lineup. He catches the ball well in traffic, so he should be able to help the passing game in the red zone. Though he's not a burner, Bowe could contribute some big plays because he runs well after the catch.

Offensive Linemen This group was among the league's best for several seasons but showed

TWO-MINUTE DRILL
A QUICK LOOK AT THE CHIEFS

It's a little bit of a rebuilding season for the Chiefs in the sense that second-year coach Herm Edwards is trying to make this a team more reliant on youth and less on veteran players. Even at that, the Chiefs aren't ridiculously far from being a contender for the AFC West title. Realistically, though, they need too many factors to fall in their favor for that to happen. Foremost is the play of their quarterback. Kansas City needs either Brodie Croyle, now in his second season, or veteran Damon Huard to seize the starting spot and be a steady hand. It spells trouble — both in the short and long term — if neither player takes command. The Chiefs also need their new defensive additions to have more of an impact than those from recent seasons. In their favor, however, is a less-than-brutal schedule. They must take advantage of early games against Houston and Minnesota, and a stretch of six of eight games at Arrowhead Stadium in the middle of the season. If these things happen and the Chiefs stay healthy at key positions, they can stay in the division race until the end. For a more likely scenario, just look to last season, where the Chiefs were among the handful of teams contending for a wild card spot in the final week of the season.

2006 Record: 9–7

2007 AFC West Prediction: 3rd

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	at Houston	1:00 pm
Sept.	16	at Chicago	4:15 pm
Sept.	23	Minnesota	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	at San Diego	4:15 pm
Oct.	7	Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Oct.	14	Cincinnati	1:00 pm
Oct.	21	at Oakland	4:05 pm
Week	8	BYE	
Nov.	4	Green Bay	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	Denver	1:00 pm
Nov.	18	at Indianapolis	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	Oakland	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	San Diego	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at Denver	4:15 pm
Dec.	16	Tennessee	1:00 pm
Dec.	23	at Detroit	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	at N.Y. Jets	8:15 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Johnson, Gonzalez: Larry Smith

Chiefs RB

Larry Johnson

Derrick Johnson

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Doing it in the division The Chiefs went 4–2 against AFC West opponents last year, making it 15 out of 17 seasons they've been .500 or better in division games. The Chiefs have won eight straight division games at home and have eight consecutive wins overall against the Raiders.

Super schedule Both defending conference champions are on the schedule for the fourth consecutive season. This time, though, games against the Colts and Bears are on the road. In previous years, at least one of the games was at Arrowhead Stadium.

December dominance Only two of the five games in the season's final month will be played at Arrowhead this year. The Chiefs are a league-best 21–2 in December home games dating back to 1995. But they are 8–17 on the road in December over that time.

Holding down the fort Though they haven't played consistently solid run defense in several years, it's been difficult to run against the Chiefs at Arrowhead. They haven't allowed a 100-yard rusher at home in their last 23 games. That's the longest such streak in the league.

some serious cracks last year, mainly at tackle. The Chiefs made a couple of offseason moves aimed at fixing the problems. The first was to sign former Dolphin Damion McIntosh in the opening days of the free agency period to be their starting left tackle. While he won't be a Pro Bowler, McIntosh is a tough, physical player who has experience against some of the league's best pass rushers. He will provide the quarterback a greater sense of security than last season. The other was to promote Chris Terry into the starting lineup at right tackle. Terry, a midseason addition last year, is a good athlete who could provide better stability at the position than the Chiefs had last year, when they used four different players as starters with varying results. Pro Bowl guard Will Shields retired and the Chiefs will feel his loss. But the middle of the line should remain solid. Guard Brian Waters and center Casey Wiegmann are skilled players. John Welbourn, who has spent most of the last three seasons at tackle, will fill in. Welbourn is probably better as a guard than tackle.

Defensive Linemen The biggest problem from this group last season was the lack of an inside pass rush. They hope to have addressed the problem with the signing of free agent tackle Alfonso Boone from Chicago and the drafting of McBride and Tyler. A better inside pass rush should make ends Jared Allen and Tamba Hali more productive, though Allen is suspended for the first four games of the season for violating the substance abuse policy. Both played well last season but failed to collect some sacks when the opposing quarterback had time to step up in the pocket and make his throw. They should only get better as they gain experience. At tackle, the Chiefs also have both of last year's starters, Ron Edwards and James Reed.

Linebackers In Derrick Johnson, Napoleon Harris and Donnie Edwards, the Chiefs have starting linebackers who fit well into the Cover 2 system the team prefers. Harris, who plays the middle, is a big and physical player who can take on offensive linemen in the running game but also runs well and covers ground in the passing game. Johnson and Edwards are athletic players who can run, play in space and cover receivers. Their versatility gives Kansas City the ability to do many different things. Each is capable of playing in obvious running or passing situations. The Chiefs may opt to use all three linebackers on running downs, or they can tailor their substitution patterns based on what they're trying to accomplish in a given situation. Kendrell Bell, a former starter on the outside, will now be a reserve.

Defensive Backs The Chiefs need at least one more solid season from each of their starting cornerbacks, Ty Law and Patrick Surtain. Neither runs as well as the Chiefs would like from their corners, but there are few reasonable alternatives for now. There's precious little experience behind them. The situation is more fluid at safety. The Chiefs have three starting candidates in incumbent strong safety Greg Wesley and second-year players Jarrad Page and Bernard Pollard. Wesley occasional makes Pro Bowl-types of plays with his range and instincts but has thus far been too inconsistent. Page, a seventh-round pick last season, played extensively as a rookie and proved difficult to fool. He covers ground well and has good instincts and ball skills. Pollard, a second-round pick last year, doesn't run as well as Page or Wesley, so he is more effective as a run stopper.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Larry Johnson, RB
Will the loss of lineman Will Shields be a reason to put Johnson behind the Rams' Steven Jackson on draft day?
Tony Gonzalez, TE
TDs haven't been very plentiful the last two seasons (7), but few can match his yardage (1,805) during this time.

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Specialists Dustin Colquitt is one of the best punters in the league and added a lot of distance to his punts last season, usually without sacrificing hang time or height. Rookie Justin Medlock will compete with incumbent Lawrence Tynes for kicking duties. Tynes has plenty of ability, but must be more consistent. Medlock has good range but better accuracy. Long-time kick return specialist Dante Hall left a vacancy when he was traded to the Rams. Jeff Webb will return kickoffs this year and showed the willingness to quickly hit the holes in limited action last season.

Coaching Staff The offensive process should be smoother than it was last season under second-year coordinator Mike Solari, who had never called plays before. Otherwise, the Chiefs will look much the same with a liberal dose of Johnson and the running game and a passing attack based on play-action. Edwards' favored Cover 2 system remains the base on defense, but some free-agent additions give coordinator Gunther Cunningham more flexibility.

Johnson, Gonzalez : Larry Smith

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
12	Croyle, Brodie	QB	6'2"	206	1	Alabama	D3-06
11	Huard, Damon	QB	6'3"	218	10	Washington	FA-04
7	Printers, Casey	QB	6'2"	222	1	Florida A&M	FA-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
26	Bennett, Michael	RB	5'9"	207	6	Wisconsin	T-NO-06
22	Brown, Dee	RB	5'10"	210	4	Syracuse	FA-05
42	Cruz, Ronnie	FB	6'0"	237	2	Northern State	FA-05
46	Grigsby, Boomer	FB	5'11"	249	2	Illinois State	D5a-05
43	Hanoian, Greg	FB	6'2"	263	1	Syracuse	FA-06
31	Holmes, Priest	RB	5'9"	213	10	Texas	FA-Bal-01
27	Johnson, Larry	RB	6'1"	230	4	Penn State	D1-03
39	Ross, Derrick	RB	5'10"	226	1	Tarleton State	FA-06
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
89	Dunn, Jason	TE	6'6"	274	10	Eastern Kentucky	FA-00
83	Gammon, Kendall	TE	6'4"	250	15	Pittsburg State	FA-NO-00
85	Gardner, Rod	WR	6'2"	219	6	Clemson	FA-06
88	Gonzalez, Tony	TE	6'5"	251	10	California	D1-97
81	Hannon, Chris	WR	6'3"	205	1	Tennessee	FA-06
87	Kennison, Eddie	WR	6'1"	201	11	LSU	FA-01
18	Parker, Samie	WR	5'11"	190	3	Oregon	D4a-04
80	Webb, Jeff	WR	6'2"	211	1	San Diego State	D6b-06
48	Willis, Keith	TE	6'6"	260	1	Virginia Tech	FA-06
84	Wilson, Kris	TE	6'2"	251	3	Pittsburgh	D2b-04
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
67	Bober, Chris	C/T	6'5"	310	7	Nebraska-Omaha	FA-NYG-04
66	Ingram, Johnathan	C	6'2"	290	2	San Diego State	FA-06
77	McIntosh, Damion	T	6'4"	320	7	Kansas State	FA-Mia-07
64	Niswanger, Rudy	C	6'5"	301	1	LSU	FA-06
79	Sampson, Kevin	T	6'4"	312	3	Syracuse	D7-04
61	Stallings, Tre	G	6'3"	315	1	Ole Miss	D6a-06
71	Svitek, Will	T	6'6"	300	2	Stanford	D6a-05
60	Terry, Chris	T	6'5"	295	7	Georgia	FA-06
54	Waters, Brian	G	6'3"	320	7	North Texas	FA-00
76	Welbourn, John	G/T	6'5"	310	8	California	T-Phi-04
62	Wiegmann, Casey	C	6'2"	285	11	Iowa	FA-Chi-01
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
69	Allen, Jared	DE	6'6"	270	3	Idaho State	D4b-04
70	Boone, Alfonso	DT	6'4"	318	6	Mt. San Antonio JC	FA-Chi-07
95	Edwards, Ron	DT	6'3"	315	6	Texas A&M	FA-Buf-06
91	Hali, Tamba	DE	6'3"	275	1	Penn State	D1-06
72	Murphy, Montez	DE	6'6"	256	1	Baylor	FA-06
92	Reed, James	DT	6'0"	286	6	Iowa State	FA-06
73	Sandidge, Tim	DT	6'1"	310	1	Virginia Tech	FA-06
96	Wilkerson, Jimmy	DE	6'2"	290	4	Oklahoma	D6-03
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
99	Bell, Kendrell	LB	6'1"	245	6	Georgia	FA-Pit-05
59	Edwards, Donnie	LB	6'2"	227	11	UCLA	FA-SD-07
97	Fox, Keyaron	LB	6'3"	235	3	Georgia Tech	D3-04
53	Griffin, Kris	LB	6'3"	240	2	Indiana (Pa.)	FA-05
58	Harris, Napoleon	LB	6'2"	255	5	Northwestern	FA-Min-07
56	Johnson, Derrick	LB	6'3"	242	2	Texas	D1-05
52	Kershaw, William	LB	6'3"	240	1	Maryland	FA-06
55	Scanlon, Rich	LB	6'2"	249	3	Syracuse	FA-04
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
38	Bragg, Michael	CB	6'1"	190	1	Texas A&M-Kingsville	FA-06
24	Law, Ty	CB	5'11"	200	12	Michigan	FA-06
45	Maxey, Marcus	CB	6'0"	192	1	Miami	D5-06
44	Page, Jarrad	S	6'0"	225	1	UCLA	D7-06
49	Pollard, Bernard	S	6'1"	224	1	Purdue	D2-06
20	Sapp, Benny	CB	5'9"	190	3	Northern Iowa	FA-04
23	Surtain, Patrick	CB	5'11"	195	9	Southern Miss	T-Mia-05
25	Wesley, Greg	S	6'2"	206	7	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	D3-00
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
2	Colquitt, Dustin	P	6'3"	210	2	Tennessee	D3-05
51	J.P. Darche	LS	6'0"	246	8	McGill (Canada)	FA-Sea-07
1	Tynes, Lawrence	K	6'1"	202	3	Troy	FA-04

Head Coach: Herman Edwards (48–48, 2–4 playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Mike Solari
Defensive Coordinator: Gunther Cunningham

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	87	Eddie Kennison
WR	**82**	**Dwayne Bowe**
LT	**77**	**Damion McIntosh**
LG	54	Brian Waters
C	62	Casey Wiegmann
RG	76	John Welbourn
RT	60	Chris Terry
TE	88	Tony Gonzalez
QB	12	Brodie Croyle
FB	46	Boomer Grigsby
RB	27	Larry Johnson

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	91	Tamba Hali
DT	95	Ron Edwards
DT	**70**	**Alfonso Boone**
DE	69	Jared Allen
OLB	56	Derrick Johnson
MLB	**50**	**Napoleon Harris**
OLB	**59**	**Donnie Edwards**
CB	24	Ty Law
CB	23	Patrick Surtain
SS	25	Greg Wesley
FS	44	Jarrad Page

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	**8**	**Justin Medlock**
P	2	Dustin Colquitt

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	11	Damon Huard
TE	89	Jason Dunn
WR	80	Jeff Webb
CB	20	Benny Sapp
S	49	Bernard Pollard

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Arrowhead Stadium (79,451)
Surface: Grass
www.kcchiefs.com
Ticket Info: 888-992-4433
Training Camp: Wisconsin-River Falls

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

DT	Alfonso Boone (Chi)
LB	Donnie Edwards (SD)
LB	Napoleon Harris (Min)
LT	Damion McIntosh (Mia)

Key Losses

T	Jordan Black (Hou)
QB	Trent Green (FA)
WR	Dante Hall (StL)
S	Sammy Knight (FA)
LB	Kawika Mitchell (NYG)
G	Will Shields (Retired)

2007 Draft

1.	Dwayne Bowe	WR	6'2"	217	LSU
2.	Turk McBride	DT	6'4"	276	Tennessee
3.	Tank Tyler	DT	6'2"	323	NC State
5.	Kolby Smith	RB	5'11"	215	Louisville
5.	Justin Medlock	K	6'0"	201	UCLA
6.	Herbert Taylor	T	6'4"	296	TCU
7.	Michael Allan	TE	6'6"	255	Whitworth

The Chiefs cleared out some veteran players in an effort to energize the roster with youth. But these weren't just any veterans. Green, Hall and Shields were long-time building blocks while Black, Knight and Mitchell were starters. Even if the replacements match their production, the Chiefs will have a tough time filling the leadership void. Kansas City's free agent acquisitions all fill some needs. Edwards and Harris give the Chiefs a solid linebacking group. McIntosh provides some stability at what last year was a position of concern. The Chiefs have been trying for years to find a quality wide receiver, and Bowe should be their guy. He is a physical player who catches the ball well in traffic. Some much-needed depth on the defensive line may also have arrived in draftees McBride and Tyler and free agent Boone.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Damon Huard	244	148	1,878	11	1
Trent Green*	198	121	1,342	7	9
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Larry Johnson	416	1,789	4.3	17	
Michael Bennett	36	200	5.6	0	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Tony Gonzalez	73	900	12.3	5	
Eddie Kennison	53	860	16.2	5	
Samie Parker	41	561	13.7	1	

Kicking: Lawrence Tynes, 24-31 FGs, 35-36 XPs, 107 points
Tackles: Kawika Mitchell,* 104; Sammy Knight,* 83
Sacks: Tamba Hali, 8
Interceptions: Ty Law, 4
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (9–7)

Sept.	10	Cincinnati	L	10–23
Sept.	17	at Denver (OT)	L	6– 9
Oct.	1	San Francisco	W	41– 0
Oct.	8	at Arizona	W	23–20
Oct.	15	at Pittsburgh	L	7–45
Oct.	22	San Diego	W	30–27
Oct.	29	Seattle	W	35–28
Nov.	5	at St. Louis	W	31–17
Nov.	12	at Miami	L	10–13
Nov.	19	Oakland	W	17–13
Nov.	23	Denver	W	19–10
Dec.	3	at Cleveland (OT)	L	28–31
Dec.	10	Baltimore	L	10–20
Dec.	17	at San Diego	L	9–20
Dec.	23	at Oakland	W	20– 9
Dec.	31	Jacksonville	W	35–30
		Postseason		
Jan.	6	at Indianapolis	L	8–23

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	321.4	16	+0.7
Rushing	133.9	9	+16.6
Passing	187.5	22	-17.3
Scoring	20.7	15	-
Punt Returns	8.0	23	-0.7
Kick Returns	21.9	24	-0.6
Red Zone TD %	60.4	3	+9.6
Defense			
Total Defense	328.9	16	+6.8
Against Rush	120.5	18	+3.2
Against Pass	208.4	18	+3.6
Points Allowed	19.7	11T	-1.0
Interceptions	15	20T	-1.3
Sacks	32	23T	-4.3
Turnover Diff.	+4	10T	-

RAIDERS

Raiders managing general partner Al Davis slipped and referred to new coach Lane Kiffin as "Lance" during Kiffin's introductory news conference in January.

Forgive Davis if he has trouble keeping straight all the coaches he has cycled through since the Raiders last won a Super Bowl, more than 23 years ago. At this point, Davis is just looking for a return to respectability after watching his beloved team lose 49 of 64 games since the Raiders played in the Super Bowl at the end of 2002 season. And he's turning to an unknown quantity in the 32-year-old Kiffin, whose only NFL experience was one year as a low-level assistant with the Jacksonville Jaguars.

"As time went on, I realized, or at least I felt that we have to go in a different direction," Davis says. "We have to move the clock back. We have to get youth in the organization. We have to go ahead and attack, with someone who really means that he will attack. … So, with that in mind, I set out to find a young, dynamic coach."

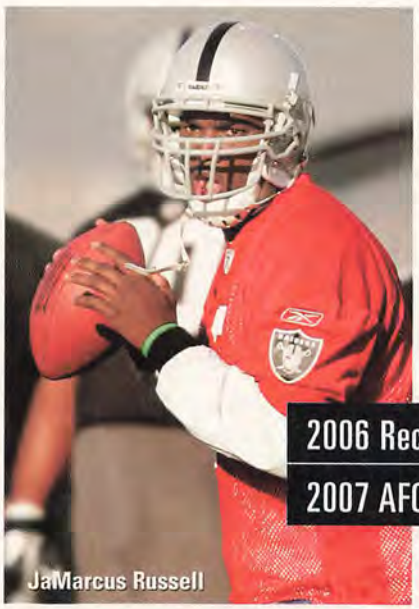
Kiffin's going to have be more than dynamic if he hopes to resuscitate a team that lost a franchise-record 14 games last year, scored only 12 offensive touchdowns and surrendered a league-worst 72 sacks.

To that end, he overhauled the coaching staff, jettisoned starting quarterback Aaron Brooks and wide receiver Randy Moss, drafted quarterback JaMarcus Russell with the first overall pick and put his players on notice that everyone is accountable for what happens from here on out. "We're building a place and building a team with people who really want to be here," Kiffin says, referring not so subtly to the trade of Moss.

That one move sounded the bell that things won't be the way they were the past four seasons. This is Kiffin's show, and he is hell-bent on proving that he and the Raiders can succeed, but not without a willingness to change the culture that went sour after the Raiders' Super Bowl loss.

Quarterbacks Russell likely won't see the field in a regular-season game in his rookie season until veterans Andrew Walter and Josh McCown fail to show they are capable of playing at a consistent level, or the Raiders' playoff aspirations end. That approach worked well for the Tennessee Titans, Arizona Cardinals and Denver Broncos last season, with Vince Young, Matt Leinart and Jay Cutler all finishing the season as starters. Ideally, Walter or McCown plays well enough for the Raiders to make a decent showing in terms of wins and losses and for the Raiders' offense to build momentum heading into the 2008 season, when Russell likely will be the clear-cut starter. Kiffin intends to help out his quarterbacks by installing the rollout and through new offensive line coach Tom Cable's reshuffling his players so that they perform better than they did last season. This position is a huge question mark entering the season, but there's the potential for it to turn into a strength if Walter, McCown and Russell develop as expected.

Running Backs Incumbents LaMont Jordan and Justin Fargas struggled with their consistency last season, whether it was due to the playcalling, blocking or whatever.


JaMarcus Russell

Kiffin isn't taking any chances, so he jumped on free agent Dominic Rhodes and drafted bruising back Michael Bush as a means of addressing a problem area. Ideally, Kiffin envisions an offense that features Jordan and Rhodes splitting the workload in order to keep both backs fresher than usual, while giving opponents more to game plan against. The addition of Cable figures to make for a more productive offensive line, which should also help. Fargas is faster than Jordan and Rhodes, but he didn't play well enough last season to merit increased playing time this season. Fullback Justin Griffith was a key addition for a Raiders team that intends to emphasize the importance of that position under Kiffin and offensive coordinator Greg Knapp.

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE RAIDERS

This is a team with a new coach, an unproven starting quarterback — Andrew Walter or top pick JaMarcus Russell — and games against both Super Bowl teams from last season. Oh, and for the Raiders to end their four-year playoff drought they'll need to do something they failed to do in eight games last season — win on the road — and something they haven't done in 14 tries — win a divisional game. The Raiders can't fare any worse under new coach Lane Kiffin than they did under predecessor Art Shell. Al Davis allowed Kiffin to make over almost the entire coaching staff and install an offense similar to the one Kiffin presided over at USC. Kiffin also has mollified mercurial wide receiver Jerry Porter, who feuded with Shell all last season and caught only one pass. Every starter and key backup from last season's standout defense returns. The keys this season figure to be how well the players adjust to playing for a 32-year-old coach, whether the offensive line can play with any consistency and whether the defense can match its impressive showing from last season. Don't count on any Saints-like one-season turnarounds for the Raiders, though there isn't any reason to think they can't win as many as seven or eight games with a few lucky bounces.

2006 Record: 2–14

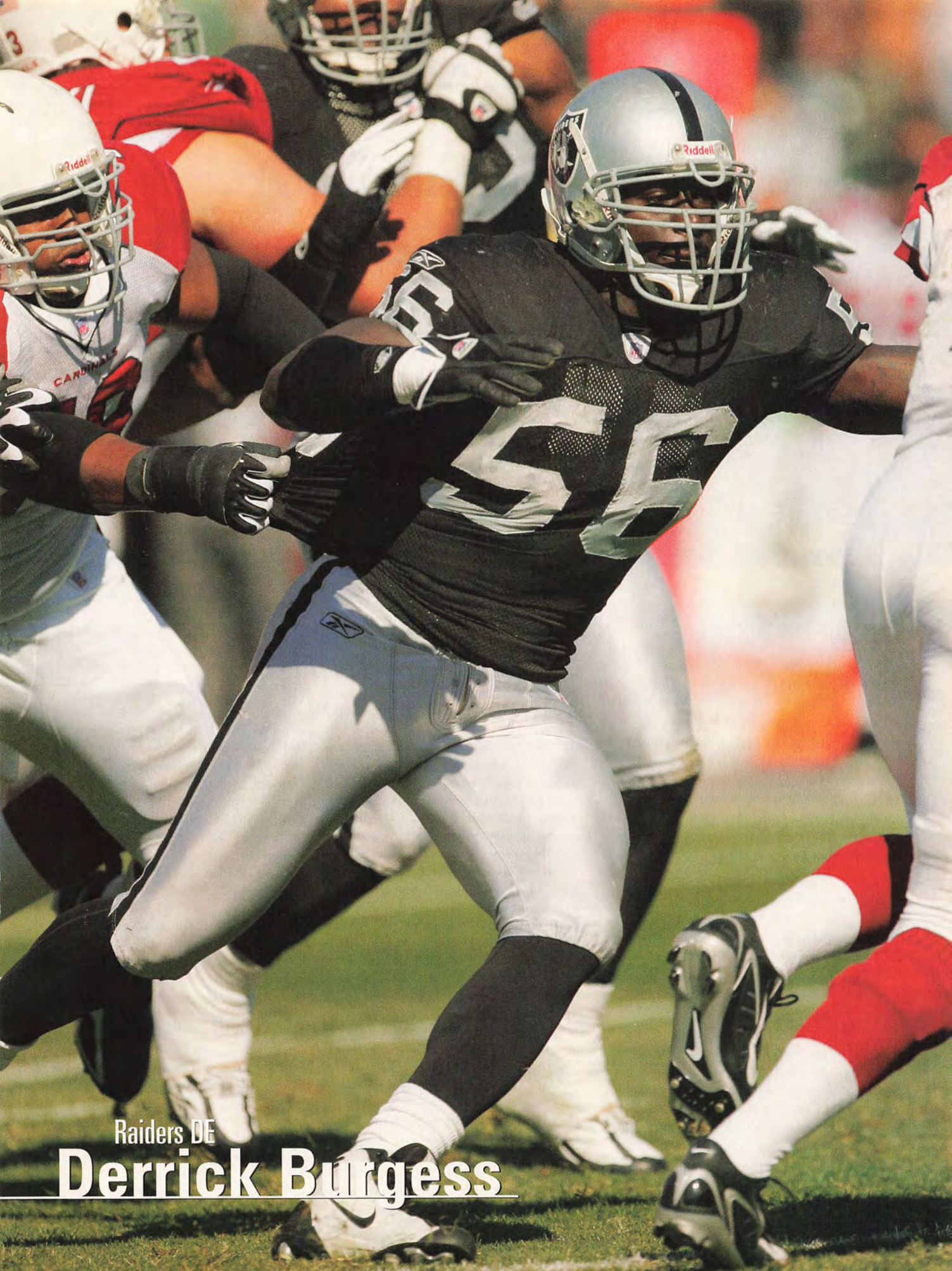
2007 AFC West Prediction: 4th

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Detroit	4:15 pm
Sept.	16	at Denver	4:15 pm
Sept.	23	Cleveland	4:05 pm
Sept.	30	at Miami	1:00 pm
Week	5	BYE	
Oct.	14	at San Diego	4:15 pm
Oct.	21	Kansas City	4:05 pm
Oct.	28	at Tennessee	1:00 pm
Nov.	4	Houston	4:15 pm
Nov.	11	Chicago	4:15 pm
Nov.	18	at Minnesota	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Dec.	2	Denver	4:05 pm
Dec.	9	at Green Bay	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Indianapolis	4:05 pm
Dec.	23	at Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Dec.	30	San Diego	4:15 pm

All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Russell: Phil Carter/US Presswire
Burgess: Peter Brouillet



Raiders DE

Derrick Burgess

Michael Huff

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

It's contagious The Raiders last won a divisional game in the 2004 season. They have lost 14 in a row since that time. They also lost all eight of their road games in 2006.

On the bright side The Raiders return every starter and key backup from a defense that finished third in yards allowed per game last season. The continuity likely will lead to the Raiders having an even better defense this season as the players are already familiar with defensive coordinator Rob Ryan's scheme.

Collegiate advantage Raiders first-year coach Lane Kiffin recruited a lot of the players who will be rookies this season when he was the recruiting coordinator at USC. That gave him and the Raiders a considerable edge heading into the NFL Draft, and it figures to give him an edge in knowing the tendencies of the players drafted by other teams.

Long-term solution? Cornerback Nnamdi Asomugha has the right to void the final year of his contract after this season. His play figures to go a long way toward determining whether the Raiders offer him a contract extension, opt to use the franchise tag on him or let him leave via free agency. Look for the Raiders to lock up Asomugha long-term before he has a chance to get away.

Receivers Jerry Porter, Ronald Curry and Mike Williams comprise a solid receiving corps. Yet, each comes with a lingering question. Curry was the most effective of the group last season, but he has a history of Achilles' injuries. Porter caught only one pass last season as a result of his being in former coach Art Shell's doghouse. Williams struggled during two seasons with the Detroit Lions and hopes to regain the playmaking ability he showed at USC. Kiffin needs to get all three to their expected level of play by implementing a more balanced, less predictable offense. Tight ends Courtney Anderson, John Madsen and Randal Williams are decent players, but the Raiders are counting on one to emerge as the clear-cut starter and fend off a challenge from rookie Zach Miller, who has above-average hands and a knack for getting open.

Offensive Linemen Cable's implementation of a zone-blocking scheme figures to play more to the strengths of his players. Four of the five starters from last season return, with the loser of the battle between Robert Gallery and Barry Sims for the left tackle spot projected to replace the departed Langston Walker at right tackle. Jake Grove and free-agent signee Jeremy Newberry give the Raiders a nice blend of experience and depth at center. Second-year players Paul McQuistan and Kevin Boothe are expected to hold down the left and right guard spots, respectively. Backups Cooper Carlisle, Chad Slaughter, Adam Treu and Corey Hulsey give the Raiders decent depth and versatility.

Defensive Linemen End Derrick Burgess and tackle Warren Sapp anchor a line that defensive coordinator Rob Ryan counts on to create pressure without committing extra players on blitzes. Burgess and Sapp are among the best at their respective positions, and they take pressure off fellow linemen Tommy Kelly and Tyler Brayton to make plays. However, Kelly and Brayton need to show improvement from last season, or else Ryan likely will turn to tackle Terdell Sands and ends Kevin Huntley, Quentin Moses and Jay Richardson for more production.

Linebackers Recently a weakness, this unit is now a strength, with Thomas Howard and Sam Williams flanking standout middle linebacker Kirk Morrison, and veteran Robert Thomas playing a key role as a situational backup. Morrison enters his third season as a full-time starter, and he already is a top-flight player. Howard has the potential to be the best of the lot. The starters and Thomas are young enough for the Raiders to believe that they haven't reached their potential. This unit could be one of the best in the league assuming they continue to improve.

Defensive Backs Nnamdi Asomugha and Fabian Washington last year matured into one of the top cornerback tandems in the league, which is even more impressive considering they play mostly man-to-man in Ryan's base scheme. Their consistent play allows Ryan to use his safeties in run support or blitzes without fear of leaving the Raiders vulnerable in pass coverage. Safeties Michael Huff and Stuart Schweigert are fresh off solid seasons, though both have areas where they need to improve before their starting jobs can be considered safe. Huff got better as his rookie season progressed, and he figures to be a top-notch player against tight ends and in run support this season. Backups Stanford Routt, Chris Carr and Duane Starks are solid.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Jerry Porter, WR
Gets a boost from Randy Moss' departure, but could have rookie JaMarcus Russell at quarterback.
Ronald Curry, WR
Strong finish last year is noteworthy, but temper that with possibility of inconsistent quarterback play.

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Specialists Kicker Sebastian Janikowski has had two consecutive subpar seasons. Punter Shane Lechler also dropped off in '06. However, both are Pro Bowl-caliber players, as is Carr, the kick returner. First-year coach Brian Schneider has been charged with reviving this lackluster unit. Treu, the long snapper, remains one of the best in the league. Kiffin has targeted special teams as a high priority.

Coaching Staff Kiffin is in his first season as an NFL head coach, or a head coach at any level, for that matter. However, he has proven NFL coordinators in Ryan and Knapp, as well as a top-notch offensive line coach in Cable, to assist him in making the huge jump from USC to the Raiders. Therefore, he only has to concern himself with the implementation of the offensive scheme he honed during his tenure in L.A. Perhaps his most daunting task will be getting his players to buy into what he and his 15 new assistants are selling. This is a team that tuned out veteran coaches Norv Turner and Art Shell in recent seasons, so Kiffin's best shot lies in his ability to get his players to succeed right away.

Huff: Peter Brouillet; Curry: Bruce Schwartzman

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
12	McCown, Josh	QB	6'4"	213	5	Sam Houston	T-Det-07
16	Walter, Andrew	QB	6'6"	230	2	Arizona State	D3a-05
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
32	Crockett, Zack	RB	6'2"	240	12	Florida State	FA-Jac-99
20	Echemandu, Adimchinobe	RB	5'10"	225	3	California	FA-06
25	Fargas, Justin	RB	6'1"	220	4	USC	D3-03
36	Griffith, Justin	FB	5'11"	232	4	Mississippi State	FA-Atl-07
34	Jordan, LaMont	RB	5'10"	230	6	Maryland	FA-NYJ-05
42	Lee, ReShard	RB	5'10"	220	3	Middle Tennessee	FA-06
33	Rhodes, Dominic	RB	5'9"	203	6	Midwestern State	FA-Ind-07
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
88	Adkisson, James	TE	6'5"	230	1	South Carolina	FA-03
83	Anderson, Courtney	TE	6'6"	270	3	San Jose State	D7-04
13	Buchanon, Will	WR	6'3"	190	1	USC	FA-06
89	Curry, Ronald	WR	6'2"	210	5	North Carolina	D7-02
80	Gabriel, Doug	WR	6'2"	215	4	UCF	D5-03
85	Madsen, John	TE	6'5"	220	1	Utah	FA-06
19	Morant, Johnnie	TE	6'4"	220	3	Syracuse	D5-04
84	Porter, Jerry	WR	6'2"	220	7	West Virginia	D2-00
86	Stewart, Tony	TE	6'5"	258	6	Penn State	FA-Cin-07
47	Wakefield, Fred	TE	6'7"	319	6	Illinois	FA-Ari-07
87	Whitted, Alvis	WR	6'0"	185	8	NC State	FA-02
17	Williams, Mike	WR	6'5"	228	2	USC	T-Det-07
86	Williams, Randal	TE	6'3"	235	6	New Hampshire	FA-05
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
67	Boothe, Kevin	G	6'5"	315	1	Cornell	D6-06
66	Carlisle, Cooper	G/T	6'5"	295	7	Florida	FA-Den-07
76	Gallery, Robert	T	6'7"	325	3	Iowa	D1-04
74	Green, Cornell	T	6'7"	315	8	UCF	FA-TB-07
64	Grove, Jake	C	6'4"	300	3	Virginia Tech	D2-04
71	Hulsey, Corey	G	6'4"	325	5	Clemson	FA-03
79	McQuistan, Paul	G	6'6"	315	1	Weber State	D3-06
61	Morris, Chris	C	6'4"	305	1	Michigan State	D7-06
60	Newberry, Jeremy	C	6'5"	313	9	California	FA-SF-07
65	Sims, Barry	G	6'5"	300	8	Utah	FA-99
78	Slaughter, Chad	T	6'8"	340	6	Alcorn State	FA-02
62	Treu, Adam	C	6'5"	300	10	Nebraska	D3-97
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
91	Brayton, Tyler	DE	6'6"	280	4	Colorado	D1-03
56	Burgess, Derrick	DE	6'2"	260	6	Ole Miss	FA-Phi-05
77	Hawthorne, Anttaj	DT	6'3"	310	2	Wisconsin	D6a-05
94	Huntley, Kevin	DE	6'7"	270	1	Kansas State	FA-06
93	Kelly, Tommy	DT	6'6"	300	3	Mississippi State	FA-04
90	Sands, Terdell	DT	6'7"	335	4	Chattanooga	FA-03
99	Sapp, Warren	DT	6'2"	300	12	Miami	FA-TB-04
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
57	Brown, Ricky	LB	6'2"	235	1	Boston College	FA-06
50	Ekejiuba, Isaiah	LB	6'4"	240	2	Virginia	FA-05
53	Howard, Thomas	LB	6'3"	240	1	UTEP	D2-06
96	Irons, Grant	LB	6'6"	285	5	Notre Dame	FA-03
52	Morrison, Kirk	LB	6'2"	240	2	San Diego State	D3b-05
55	Thomas, Robert	LB	6'0"	235	5	UCLA	FA-06
54	Williams, Sam	LB	6'5"	260	4	Fresno State	D3-03
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
21	Asomugha, Nnamdi	CB	6'2"	210	4	California	D1-03
29	Bing, Darnell	S	6'2"	230	1	USC	D4-06
23	Carr, Chris	CB	5'10"	180	2	Boise State	FA-05
40	Cooper, Jarrod	S	6'1"	215	6	Kansas State	FA-04
36	Gibson, Derrick	S	6'2"	215	6	Florida State	D1-01
24	Huff, Michael	S	6'1"	205	1	Texas	D1-06
26	Routt, Stanford	CB	6'1"	195	2	Houston	D2-05
30	Schweigert, Stuart	S	6'2"	210	3	Purdue	D3-04
22	Starks, Duane	CB	5'10"	175	9	Miami	FA-NE-06
27	Washington, Fabian	CB	5'11"	185	2	Nebraska	D1-05
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
11	Janikowski, Sebastian	K	6'2"	250	7	Florida State	D1-00
9	Lechler, Shane	P	6'2"	225	7	Texas A&M	D5-00

Head Coach: Lane Kiffin (first season)
Offensive Coordinator: Greg Knapp
Defensive Coordinator: Rob Ryan

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	84	Jerry Porter
WR	89	Ronald Curry
LT	65	Barry Sims
LG	79	Paul McQuistan
C	64	Jake Grove
RG	67	Kevin Boothe
RT	76	Robert Gallery
TE	**45**	**Zach Miller**
QB	16	Andrew Walter
FB	**36**	**Justin Griffith**
RB	34	LaMont Jordan

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	91	Tyler Brayton
DT	99	Warren Sapp
DT	93	Tommy Kelly
DE	56	Derrick Burgess
OLB	53	Thomas Howard
MLB	52	Kirk Morrison
OLB	54	Sam Williams
CB	21	Nnamdi Asomugha
CB	27	Fabian Washington
SS	24	Michael Huff
FS	30	Stuart Schweigert

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	11	Sebastian Janikowski
P	9	Shane Lechler

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	**2**	**JaMarcus Russell**
RB	**33**	**Dominic Rhodes**
WR	**17**	**Mike Williams**
DE	**96**	**Quentin Moses**
LB	55	Robert Thomas
CB	26	Stanford Routt

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: McAfee Coliseum (63,026)
Surface: Grass
www.raiders.com
Ticket Info: 800-724-3377
Training Camp: Napa Valley Marriott (Napa, CA)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

G	Cooper Carlisle	(Den)
FB	Justin Griffith	(Atl)
QB	Josh McCown	(Det)
C	Jeremy Newberry	(SF)
RB	Dominic Rhodes	(Ind)
WR	Mike Williams	(Det)

Key Losses

QB	Aaron Brooks	(FA)
DE	Lance Johnstone	(FA)
WR	Randy Moss	(NE)
CB	Tyrone Poole	(FA)
T	Langston Walker	(Buf)

2007 Draft

1.	JaMarcus Russell	QB	6'6"	263	LSU
2.	Zach Miller	TE	6'5"	259	Arizona State
3.	Quentin Moses	DE	6'5"	249	Georgia
3.	Mario Henderson	T	6'6"	302	Florida State
3.	Johnnie Lee Higgins	WR	5'11"	184	UTEP
4.	Michael Bush	RB	6'3"	253	Louisville
4.	John Bowie	CB	5'11"	188	Cincinnati
5.	Jay Richardson	DE	6'5"	276	Ohio State
5.	Eric Frampton	SS	5'11"	205	Washington State
6.	Oren O'Neal	FB	6'0"	244	Arkansas State
7.	Johnathan Holland	WR	6'0"	191	Louisiana Tech

The Raiders focused all their attention on rebuilding an offensive unit that scored only 12 TDs and allowed a league-worst 72 sacks last season. The good news is, the Raiders didn't lose any players who can't be replaced. The loss of Brooks, Walker and Moss likely will be forgotten by the start of training camp. The addition of Rhodes gives the Raiders a nice complement to LaMont Jordan. Griffith is a versatile player who figures to fit well into an offense that values his position. Newberry and Carlisle are the kind of players coach Lane Kiffin is looking for in an attempt to upgrade the line play.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Andrew Walter	276	147	1,677	3	13
Aaron Brooks*	192	110	1,105	3	8
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Justin Fargas	178	659	3.7	1	
LaMont Jordan	114	434	3.8	2	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Ronald Curry	62	727	11.7	1	
Randy Moss*	42	553	13.2	3	
Randal Williams	28	293	10.5	0	

Kicking: Sebastian Janikowski, 18-25 FGs, 16-16 XPs, 70 points
Tackles: Kirk Morrison, 127; Thomas Howard, 110
Sacks: Derrick Burgess, 11
Interceptions: Nnamdi Asomugha, 8
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (2–14)

Sept.	11	San Diego	L	0–27
Sept.	17	at Baltimore	L	6–28
Oct.	1	Cleveland	L	21–24
Oct.	8	at San Francisco	L	20–34
Oct.	15	at Denver	L	3–13
Oct.	22	Arizona	W	22– 9
Oct.	29	Pittsburgh	W	20–13
Nov.	6	at Seattle	L	0–16
Nov.	12	Denver	L	13–17
Nov.	19	at Kansas City	L	13–17
Nov.	26	at San Diego	L	14–21
Dec.	3	Houston	L	14–23
Dec.	10	at Cincinnati	L	10–27
Dec.	17	St. Louis	L	0–20
Dec.	23	Kansas City	L	9–20
Dec.	31	at N.Y. Jets	L	3–23

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	**Stat**	**NFL Rank**	**+/- Avg.**
Total Offense	246.2	32	-75.9
Rushing	94.9	29	-22.4
Passing	151.3	31	-53.5
Scoring	10.5	32	-10.2
Punt Returns	6.2	31	-2.5
Kick Returns	24.8	2	+2.3
Red Zone TD %	28.6	32	-22.2
Defense			
Total Defense	284.8	3	-37.3
Against Rush	134.0	25	+16.7
Against Pass	150.8	1	-54.0
Points Allowed	20.8	18	+0.1
Interceptions	18	10T	+1.7
Sacks	34	19T	-2.3
Turnover Diff.	-23	32	-

CHARGERS

There's no mystery to new head coach Norv Turner's mission — an extended postseason stay. The Chargers are loaded with one of the NFL's most talented rosters and once again point their compass toward the playoffs. But, according to team president Dean Spanos, getting there isn't enough.

Former coach Marty Schottenheimer knows that. Last season he directed the Chargers to an NFL-best 14–2 regular season and their second AFC West title in three years. But after an embarrassing postseason loss to New England, Schottenheimer was kicked to the curb.

Turner, a recycled product with a 58–82–1 mark as a head coach, was scooped up by general manager A.J. Smith. If nothing else, the two are on speaking terms. That wasn't the case in Smith and Schottenheimer's dysfunctional relationship.

"That was the most important factor to all of us, not only me but talking to the players," Smith says. "We think we're a good football team, and we're so close and a lot of people are afraid of change, meaning somebody coming in with a brand new big playbook and have to start all over again and flip over the defense or flip over the offense.

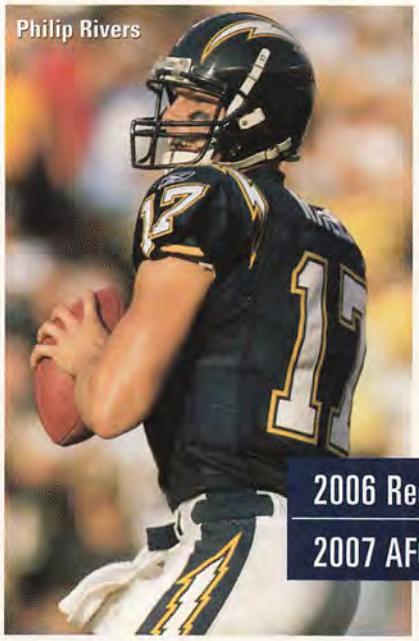
"So I thought it was important, so we mapped out a plan with that in mind."

Few teams can match an offense featuring league MVP LaDainian Tomlinson, quarterback Philip Rivers and tight end Antonio Gates. Defensively, the Chargers are nearly as stout with last year's NFL sack leader Shawne Merriman and Pro Bowl tackle Jamal Williams.

Add it up and a trip to neighboring Arizona for Super Bowl XLII could be in the cards. Playing with such a stacked deck, Spanos and Smith expect nothing less.

Quarterbacks Rivers looks to improve on his first year as a starter, a season which saw him earn Pro Bowl honors. The thinking is Rivers' considerable upside will blossom even quicker with Turner on board. Dating to his days in Dallas with Troy Aikman, Turner has a knack for lifting his quarterbacks' level of play. Rivers, though, doesn't need much help. This cool customer heaved 22 touchdown passes against just nine interceptions in '06. Nearly as important was the strong leadership he provided in replacing Drew Brees. Rivers is backed up by veteran Billy Volek and the team remains optimistic about No. 3 quarterback Charlie Whitehurst, a second-year pro.

Running Backs America's Finest City features America's finest running back. Tomlinson was sensational last year, collecting a record nearly every weekend on his way to an MVP season. Tomlinson not only set the standard for total points (186) and touchdowns (31) in a season, he led the NFL in rushing yards as well. At 27 years old and entering his seventh season, Tomlinson figures to have another solid year. With the offensive line remaining intact and fullback Lorenzo Neal back to blast open holes, L.T. could add another historic chapter to his already unbelievable career. Tomlinson's backup, the bruising Michael Turner, was nearly traded in the offseason. But he returns, supplying the change-up from Tomlinson's shifty style. Both have the luxury of running behind Neal, who is the NFL's premier fullback and has been the lead blocker for a 1,000-yard rusher in 10 consecutive seasons.


Philip Rivers

Receivers Gates remains the Chargers top threat in the passing game. He played at an All-Pro caliber last year and is eager to keep expanding his game. The combination of Gates and Tomlinson creates mismatches, which the Chargers are happy to exploit. The wideouts will have a new look, with third-year pro Vincent Jackson expected to secure one starting role, and rookie Craig Davis pushing Eric Parker to go opposite Jackson. If Davis, the 30th overall pick in this year's draft, can get on the field it gives the Chargers a legitimate deep threat, which

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

A QUICK LOOK AT THE CHARGERS

The Chargers are still smarting about letting last season's opportunity slip away. That was the fuel for their motivational fire this offseason, and they're bent on getting deep into the playoffs this year. But can the team really bank on LaDainian Tomlinson scoring 31 touchdowns? Or Antonio Gates having nearly 1,000 receiving yards? Or Philip Rivers not blinking in the face of adversity? Strangely, the answer could be yes. This isn't a team that is on its last leg. The Chargers standouts — save defensive tackle Jamal Williams — are still young. That being said, they realize that every team with eyes on greatness has a short window to shine. That's why the pressure is on to produce when the stakes are the highest. If so, they will do it with basically the same roster, as there was very little emphasis in the offseason to upgrade a team that saw 11 of its players earn Pro Bowl honors. Their biggest move was retaining left guard Kris Dielman, who spurned a richer offer from the Seahawks to remain in San Diego. What's worth watching is how long it takes the players and new coaches — not only Norv Turner, but also offensive coordinator Clarence Shelmon and defensive coordinator Ted Cottrell — to find the same page. Most are predicting the transition will be smooth, but it takes time for players and coaches to find a comfort level with each other.

2006 Record: 14–2

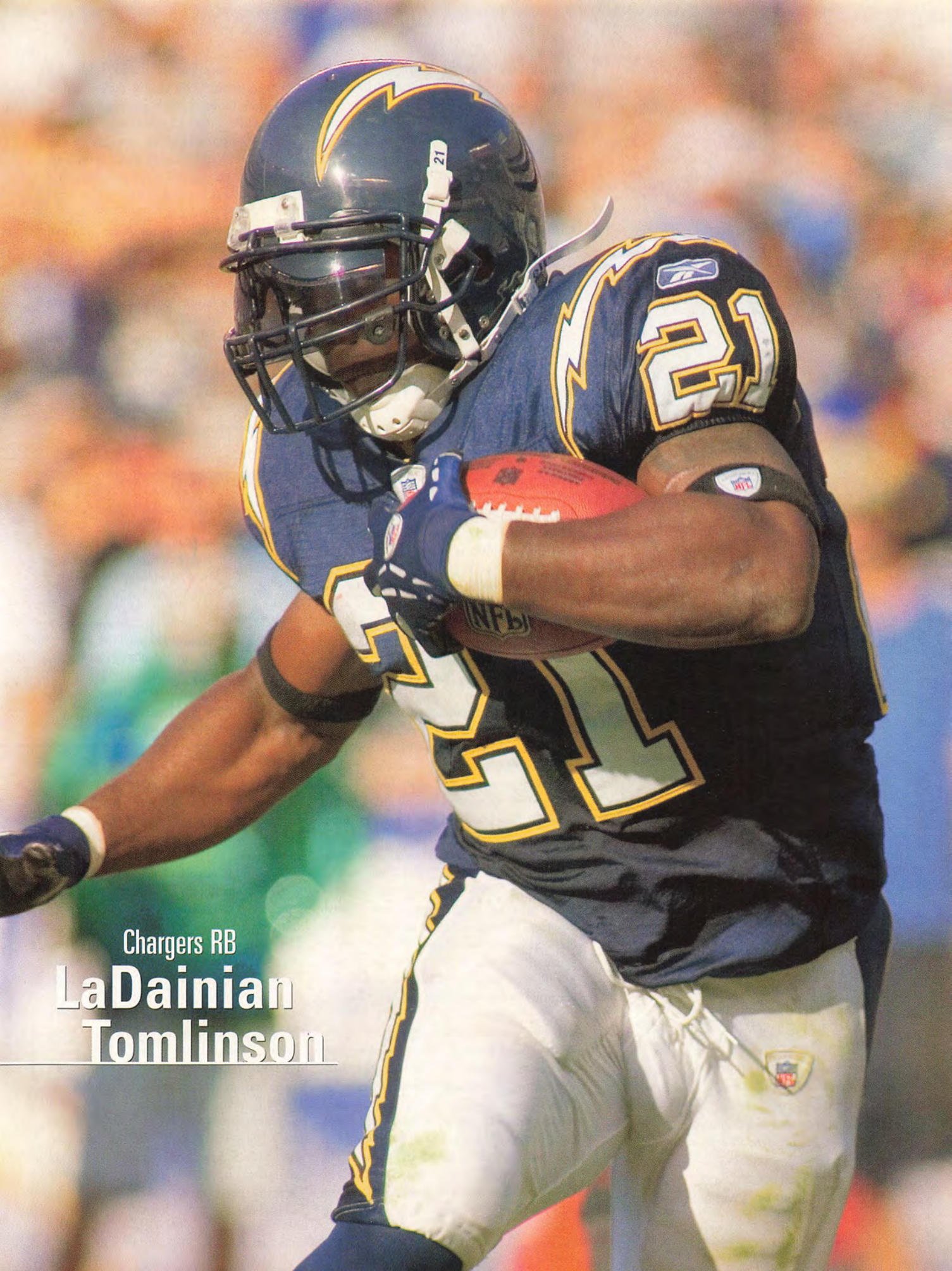
2007 AFC West Prediction: 1st

2007 SCHEDULE

Sept.	9	Chicago	4:15 pm
Sept.	16	at New England	8:15 pm
Sept.	23	at Green Bay	1:00 pm
Sept.	30	Kansas City	4:15 pm
Oct.	7	at Denver	4:15 pm
Oct.	14	Oakland	4:15 pm
Week	7	BYE	
Oct.	28	Houston	4:05 pm
Nov.	4	at Minnesota	1:00 pm
Nov.	11	Indianapolis	8:15 pm
Nov.	18	at Jacksonville	1:00 pm
Nov.	25	Baltimore	4:15 pm
Dec.	2	at Kansas City	1:00 pm
Dec.	9	at Tennessee	1:00 pm
Dec.	16	Detroit	4:15 pm
Dec.	24	Denver	8:00 pm
Dec.	30	at Oakland	4:15 pm

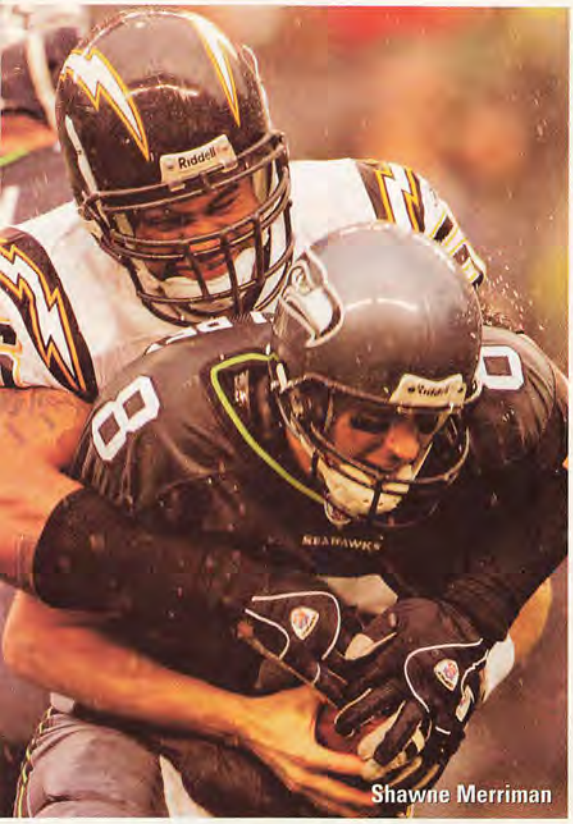
All Times Eastern (Times after Nov. 5 subject to change)

Rivers, Tomlinson: Peter Brouillet



Chargers RB

LaDainian Tomlinson


Shawne Merriman

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

Super schedule For the third straight season, the Chargers will face both Super Bowl participants from the previous season. The Chargers open against the NFC champion Chicago Bears, then play the world champion Indianapolis Colts on Nov. 11. Last year, the Chargers swept the Pittsburgh Steelers and Seattle Seahawks. In '05, the team lost against the Philadelphia Eagles and defeated the New England Patriots.

No cover jinx LaDainian Tomlinson was asked to appear on the cover of the Madden 2008 video game. But he declined, which brought a smile to Chargers fans. Like most NFL observers, they are aware of the Madden cover boy jinx, with the player usually suffering some sort of injury. Seattle's Shaun Alexander was the previous cover subject, and his encore to his MVP season was derailed by a foot injury. The Titans' Vince Young was chosen after Tomlinson passed.

Cool hand Rivers Among the reasons for quarterback Philip Rivers' success was being cool when it counted the most. Rivers was the NFL's leading passer in the fourth quarter and its fourth-leading passer in the second half. Among his most dramatic late heroics was a 37-yard touchdown pass to Vincent Jackson with 29 seconds left for a win at Seattle.

is about the only thing the Bolts' high-powered offense has been lacking in recent years. Scary as it sounds, Davis' speed could make Tomlinson and Gates even more effective by opening room underneath. Malcom Floyd, at 6'5", is a tempting target in the red zone.

Offensive Linemen While barely registering a blip on the free agency screen, the Chargers were ecstatic to bring back Kris Dielman. The nasty left guard nearly split for Seattle but stayed in San Diego for considerably less money. Left tackle Marcus McNeill is coming off a Pro Bowl rookie year. He figures to improve, as does Pro Bowl center Nick Hardwick. Right guard Mike Goff isn't shy about lending a hand to Hardwick or right tackle Shane Olivea. This is a solid group beginning its second season together.

Defensive Linemen For years Williams was overlooked — not anymore. He made his second straight Pro Bowl and, while entering his 10th season, he's not slowing down. With Williams clogging the middle, it's difficult for blockers zero in on linebackers. End Luis Castillo is anxious to see what a full season can bring. He had seven sacks and 52 tackles despite a balky ankle that kept him out of six games. Opposite Castillo is Igor Olshansky, who is among the team's top run-stuffers. Backup end Jacques Cesaire doesn't get many headlines, but he's a key part of the defensive line's rotation.

Linebackers Merriman paced the NFL with 17 sacks despite being suspended four games for steroids. Merriman has quickly become a defensive force, one of those rare players who is a game-changer with his relentless pursuit of quarterbacks. Shaun Phillips doesn't draw the spotlight like Merriman, but he's nearly as effective. Phillips had 11.5 sacks in his first year as a starter. The inside positions aren't as settled. With starters Donnie Edwards — the team's top tackler in each of the past five seasons — and Randall Godfrey allowed to flee, former backups Stephen Cooper and Matt Wilhelm have to prove they're up to the challenge. If not, second-year pro Tim Dobbins and rookie Anthony Waters could get a shot.

Defensive Backs Cornerback Quentin Jammer shed his critics and played his best all-around season in '06; he had four interceptions. Drayton Florence, the other corner, was also on his game although mental mistakes prevented him from doing even better. Florence will need to stiff-arm Antonio Cromartie to retain his job. The team has high hopes for the athletic Cromartie, last year's first-round pick. Free safety Marlon McCree delivered leadership and communication, if not a bushel of turnovers (two). The strong safety spot is open after Terrence Kiel's departure. Rookie Eric Weddle, a second-round selection, will get his opportunity to assume Kiel's position. If Weddle needs some seasoning, the team has veterans Clinton Hart and Bhawoh Jue ready to take over.

Specialists Nate Kaeding got to the Pro Bowl after setting the team's record for points (136) by a kicker. Punter Mike Scifres is a weapon who understands it's all about net average on the returns and not accumulating gaudy distance numbers. Turner is solid on kick returns, while the punt return chores are an open competition. The team would like to preserve the slight Parker for the passing game. So Darren Sproles, Cromartie and possibly even Weddle will compete for the responsibility.

ATHLON FANTASY SPORTS

Antonio Gates/TE
Numbers were down slightly last season, but no reason to think he won't be the top TE again in 2007.

Vincent Jackson/WR
A sleeper pick. Jackson is poised to become the Chargers' featured receiver this season.

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Coaching Staff After firing Schottenheimer — the only active NFL coach with 200 victories — the Chargers resurrected Turner's head-coaching career. Turner is familiar with the offense, as he installed it in 2001 as the Chargers' offensive coordinator. While Turner knows his offensive stuff, his poor record as a head coach (24 games under .500) makes some Chargers fans nervous. The team also replaced both coordinators, after Cam Cameron (Miami) and Wade Phillips (Dallas) took head coaching jobs. Clarence Shelmon, the Chargers' longtime running backs coach, is the offensive coordinator — with plenty of help from Turner. Ted Cottrell, who had some dynamite defenses back in Buffalo when Smith was also there, takes over the defense. He will retain the team's effective 3-4 alignment, with a focus on improving the unit's third-down woes. Ron Rivera, who was the Super Bowl Bears' defensive coordinator last season and a finalist for the Chargers' head coaching job, will direct the linebackers.

Merriman: Scott Cohen/US Presswire; Gates: Brad Schloss

2007 ROSTER

	QUARTERBACKS	POS	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED
17	Rivers, Philip	QB	6'5"	228	3	NC State	T-NYG-04
7	Volek, Billy	QB	6'2"	214	7	Fresno State	T-Ten-06
6	Whitehurst, Charlie	QB	6'4"	227	1	Clemson	D3-06
	RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
22	Gross, Tyronne	RB	5'9"	213	1	Eastern Oregon	FA-06
41	Neal, Lorenzo	FB	5'11"	255	14	Fresno State	FA-Cin-03
26	Perkins, Ray	RB	5'10"	205	1	SE Louisiana	FA-05
34	Pinnock, Andrew	FB	5'10"	250	4	South Carolina	D7-03
43	Sproles, Darren	RB	5'6"	181	2	Kansas State	D4-05
21	Tomlinson, LaDainian	RB	5'10"	221	6	TCU	D1-01
33	Turner, Michael	RB	5'10"	237	3	Northern Illinois	D5b-04
	RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
16	Bryant, Ricky	WR	6'0"	185	1	Hofstra	FA-06
82	Camarillo, Greg	WR	6'1"	190	1	Stanford	FA-05
80	Floyd, Malcom	WR	6'5"	225	1	Wyoming	FA-04
85	Gates, Antonio	TE	6'4"	260	4	Kent State	FA-03
46	Griffeth, Kelly	TE	6'5"	298	1	Fort Hays State	FA-06
83	Jackson, Vincent	WR	6'5"	241	2	Northern Colorado	D2-05
86	Manumaleuna, Brandon	TE	6'2"	288	6	Arizona	T-StL-06
81	Osgood, Kassim	WR	6'5"	220	4	San Diego State	FA-03
88	Parker, Eric	WR	6'0"	180	5	Tennessee	FA-02
	OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
66	Clary, Jeromey	T	6'6"	306	1	Kansas State	D6a-06
68	Dielman, Kris	G	6'4"	310	4	Indiana	FA-03
79	Goff, Mike	G	6'5"	311	9	Iowa	FA-Cin-04
61	Hardwick, Nick	C	6'4"	295	3	Purdue	D3b-04
71	Lekkerkerker, Cory	T	6'7"	323	2	Cal-Davis	FA-05
73	McNeill, Marcus	T	6'7"	336	1	Auburn	D2-06
63	Mruczkowski, Scott	C/G	6'5"	318	2	Bowling Green	D7-05
72	Oben, Roman	T	6'4"	305	11	Louisville	T-TB-04
70	Olivea, Shane	T	6'4"	312	3	Ohio State	D7b-04
65	Withrow, Cory	C/G	6'2"	287	7	Washington State	FA-06
	DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
97	Bingham, Ryon	DT	6'3"	303	2	Nebraska	D7a-04
93	Castillo, Luis	DE	6'3"	290	2	Northwestern	D1b-05
74	Cesaire, Jacques	DE	6'2"	295	4	Southern Conn. State	FA-03
91	McKinney, Brandon	DT	6'2"	324	1	Michigan State	FA-06
99	Olshansky, Igor	DE	6'6"	309	3	Oregon	D2-04
96	Page, Chase	DE	6'5"	295	1	North Carolina	D7a-06
98	Robinson, Derreck	DE	6'4"	289	2	Iowa	FA-05
76	Williams, Jamal	DT	6'3"	348	9	Oklahoma State	SD2-98
	LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
54	Cooper, Stephen	LB	6'1"	235	4	Maine	FA-03
51	Dobbins, Tim	LB	6'1"	246	1	Iowa State	D5-06
92	Harris, Marques	LB	6'1"	231	2	Southern Utah State	FA-05
40	Kahui, Kurt	LB	6'1"	240	1	San Diego State	FA-06
56	Merriman, Shawne	LB	6'4"	272	2	Maryland	D1a-05
95	Phillips, Shaun	LB	6'3"	262	3	Purdue	D4-04
52	Polk, Carlos	LB	6'2"	262	6	Nebraska	D4-01
57	Wilhelm, Matt	LB	6'4"	245	4	Ohio State	D4-03
	DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
25	Cromartie, Antonio	CB	6'2"	203	1	Florida State	D1-06
29	Florence, Drayton	CB	6'0"	195	4	Tuskegee	D2a-03
38	Franklin, Gabe	CB	5'10"	185	1	Boise State	FA-06
24	Gordon, Cletis	CB	6'1"	197	1	Jackson State	FA-06
28	Gregory, Steve	CB	5'11"	185	1	Syracuse	FA-06
42	Hart, Clinton	SS	6'0"	205	4	Central Florida CC	W-Phi-04
23	Jammer, Quentin	CB	6'0"	204	5	Texas	D1-02
27	Jue, Bhawoh	FS	6'0"	200	6	Penn State	FA-GB-05
20	McCree, Marlon	FS	5'11"	202	6	Kentucky	FA-Car-06
	SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**
50	Binn, David	LS	6'3"	223	13	California	FA-94
10	Kaeding, Nate	K	6'0"	187	3	Iowa	D3a-04
5	Scifres, Mike	P	6'2"	236	4	Western Illinois	D5-03

Head Coach: Norv Turner (58–82–1, 1–1 Playoffs)
Offensive Coordinator: Clarence Shelmon
Defensive Coordinator: Ted Cottrell

PROJECTED LINEUP

OFFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
WR	83	Vincent Jackson
WR	**84**	**Craig Davis**
LT	73	Marcus McNeill
LG	68	Kris Dielman
C	61	Nick Hardwick
RG	79	Mike Goff
RT	70	Shane Olivea
TE	85	Antonio Gates
QB	17	Philip Rivers
FB	41	Lorenzo Neal
RB	21	LaDainian Tomlinson

DEFENSE

Pos.	No.	Name
DE	99	Igor Olshansky
DT	76	Jamal Williams
DE	93	Luis Castillo
OLB	56	Shawne Merriman
ILB	57	Matt Wilhelm
ILB	54	Stephen Cooper
OLB	95	Shaun Phillips
CB	29	Drayton Florence
CB	23	Quentin Jammer
SS	42	Clinton Hart
FS	20	Marlon McCree

SPECIALISTS

Pos.	No.	Name
K	10	Nate Kaeding
P	5	Mike Scifres

KEY RESERVES

Pos.	No.	Name
QB	7	Billy Volek
RB	33	Michael Turner
WR	88	Eric Parker
DE	74	Jacques Cesaire
CB	31	Antonio Cromartie

New acquisitions in **bold**

Stadium: Qualcomm Stadium (71,500)
Surface: Grass
www.chargers.com
Ticket Info: 877-242-7437
Training Camp: Chargers Park (SD)

OFFSEASON IMPACT

Key Additions

None

Key Losses

ILB	Donnie Edwards (KC)
ILB	Randall Godfrey (FA)
SS	Terrence Kiel (FA)
WR	Keenan McCardell (FA)

2007 Draft

1.	Craig Davis	WR	6'1"	207	LSU
2.	Eric Weddle	SS	5'11"	200	Utah
3.	Anthony Waters	ILB	6'3"	245	Clemson
4.	Scott Chandler	TE	6'7"	257	Iowa
5.	Legedu Naanee	WR	6'2"	225	Boise State
7.	Brandon Siler	ILB	6'2"	238	Florida

The Chargers made few friends with the program vendors following an offseason of few changes to their roster. Under general manager A.J. Smith's direction, the Chargers have long been bit players in the free agency market. That held true again as Smith didn't so much dip his toe in the free-agency pool. Instead, the key free agent signing came from within when left guard Kris Dielman agreed to a six-year, $39 million contract, spurning Seattle's more lucrative offer. Dielman, a converted defensive linemen, was the team's co-linemen of the year in 2006. The team did subtract linebackers Edwards, Godfrey and Foley, veteran wide receiver McCardell and safety Kiel. The Chargers hope backups Matt Wilhelm and Stephen Cooper replace Edwards and Godfrey, with Vincent Jackson or Davis, the first-round pick, securing McCardell's role. Weddle, taken in the second round, or Clinton Hart, could fill in for Kiel. Other than that — save for Norv Turner's fresh face as head coach — the 2007 Chargers look quite a bit like the 2006 version. And why not? The Bolts had an NFL-best 14–2 record last year.

2006 INDIVIDUAL STATS

Passing	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	TD	Int.
Philip Rivers	460	284	3,388	22	9
Rushing	**Att.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
LaDainian Tomlinson	348	1,815	5.2	28	
Michael Turner	80	502	6.3	2	
Receiving	**Rec.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**TD**	
Antonio Gates	71	924	13.0	9	
LaDainian Tomlinson	56	508	9.1	3	
Eric Parker	48	659	13.7	0	
Vincent Jackson	27	453	16.8	6	

Kicking: Nate Kaeding, 26-29 FGs, 58-58 XPs, 136 points
Tackles: Donnie Edwards*, 141; Quentin Jammer, 78
Sacks: Shawne Merriman, 17
Interceptions: Quentin Jammer, 4
*No longer with team

2006 RESULTS (14–2)

Sept.	11	at Oakland	W	27– 0
Sept.	17	Tennessee	W	40– 7
Oct.	1	at Baltimore	L	13–16
Oct.	8	Pittsburgh	W	23–13
Oct.	15	at San Francisco	W	48–19
Oct.	22	at Kansas City	L	27–30
Oct.	29	St. Louis	W	38–24
Nov.	5	Cleveland	W	32–25
Nov.	12	at Cincinnati	W	49–41
Nov.	19	at Denver	W	35–27
Nov.	26	Oakland	W	21–14
Dec.	3	at Buffalo	W	24–21
Dec.	10	Denver	W	48–20
Dec.	17	Kansas City	W	20– 9
Dec.	24	at Seattle	W	20–17
Dec.	31	Arizona	W	27–20
Postseason				
Jan.	14	New England	L	21–24

2006 TEAM STATS

Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	+/- Avg.
Total Offense	365.0	4	+42.9
Rushing	161.1	2	+43.8
Passing	203.9	16	-0.9
Scoring	30.8	1	+10.1
Punt Returns	8.5	17	-0.2
Kick Returns	24.5	3	+2.0
Red Zone TD %	67.7	1	+16.9
Defense			
Total Defense	301.6	10	-20.5
Against Rush	100.8	7	-16.5
Against Pass	200.8	13	-4.0
Points Allowed	18.9	7	-1.8
Interceptions	16	17T	-0.3
Sacks	61	1	+24.7
Turnover Diff.	+13	3	-

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PRESENTS

THE 2007 DRAFT RECAP

by Dan Shonka

ARIZONA CARDINALS

The Cardinals had offensive tackle Levi Brown graded higher than Joe Thomas. Brown is a natural knee bender with range, body control and mobility. Offensive line coach Russ Grimm needed a cornerstone to anchor his line in pass protection and generate some power in the running game. Brown provides both. Defensive tackle Alan Branch, a first-round projection, was a steal at the top of the second. He will give the interior line a run-stuffer and a difference-maker. Buster Davis is shorter than ideal but is a tough, physical and productive inside linebacker. Receiver Steve Breaston was a good value in the fifth. Early in his career he was an elusive kick and punt returner. He brings his elusiveness and make-you-miss ability to an already strong receiving corps. Sure-handed Ben Patrick fills a major tight end need. **Grade: A**

ATLANTA FALCONS

The Falcons need a pass rusher with Patrick Kerney gone and John Abraham chronically injured. Defensive end Jamaal Anderson is an excellent athlete with size, quickness, and agility. He's a work in progress but has first-round skills and ability. Tackle Justin Blalock helps beef up an angular offensive line that new coach Bobby Petrino wants to get bigger and stronger. Corner Chris Houston was high on many draft boards and allows Jimmy Williams to move inside to safety. Laurent Robinson is a productive and speedy vertical receiver. Stephen Nicholas will be a special teams phenom and compete at the weak-side linebacker. Tight end Martrez Milner needs to be more consistent. Doug Datish is a physical swingman who has played all the offensive line positions. Safety Daren Stone may be the sleeper of the Falcons' draft with his size and physical play. Defensive tackle Trey Lewis, corner David Irons, and running back Jason Snelling are all developmental players. **Grade: A-**

BALTIMORE RAVENS

Guard Ben Grubbs is aggressive, athletic and competitive. He fills a void with the departure of Edwin Mulitalo. Yamon Figurs is an explosive and elusive returner who may replace injured B.J. Sams. He needs work as a receiver as his hands are inconsistent. Marshal Yanda was a reach in the third round and will battle for the guard spot opposite Grubbs. Outside linebacker Antwan Barnes is a raw talent who had a productive senior year and an outstanding combine workout. Le'Ron McClain is a bulldozing fullback with good hands. Heisman Trophy winner Troy Smith was a value selection in the fifth round. A quick decision-maker with a strong arm, he makes plays when the play breaks down around him. Prescott Burgess has the flexibility to play as an inside linebacker in the Ravens' 3-4 system. **Grade: B**

BUFFALO BILLS

Marshawn Lynch filled a huge need for the Bills at running back. He's an explosive player who runs inside with power or outside with burst and speed. Linebacker Paul Posluszny reminded GM Marv Levy of Shane Conlan. Posluszny fills a need with London Fletcher-Baker gone but is better on the outside. At quarterback, Trent Edwards can make all the pro-style throws but must overcome an injury bug. Running back Dwayne Wright is a downhill runner with lower body power. Like Edwards, he is productive when healthy. John Wendling is a big free safety who is smart, athletic and can run. His physical and aggressive play will be featured on special teams and as a backup safety. Tight end Derek Schouman is a vertical threat as a receiver and will fit in as an H-back. Defensive end C.J. Ah You has an explosive first step and had an excellent combine workout. **Grade: B+**

CAROLINA PANTHERS

Jon Beason is strong, physical and versatile. He can play any of the linebacker spots. He is a three-down linebacker who has good instincts to react quickly to the run or pass. Dwayne Jarrett was drafted to replace Keyshawn Johnson. He is a possession, slot-type receiver who will be dangerous in the red zone because of his height and leaping ability. Ryan Kalil will compete with Justin Hartwig for the center position. Charles Johnson gives the Panthers flexibility at defensive end and a replacement for Mike Rucker when he retires. Ryne Robinson is a return specialist who has been productive as a receiver. Dante Rosario is an H-back type with soft and natural hands. Tim Shaw is the sleeper of the Carolina draft. He projects as an inside linebacker after playing defensive end in college. He is a blue-collar tough guy who is instinctive, aggressive and competitive. C.J. Wilson is a press corner who lacks long speed. **Grade: B+**

CHICAGO BEARS

Tight end Greg Olsen gives the Bears a vertical receiver who can split Cover 2 coverage. He needs more upper and lower body strength to be an effective blocker. Dan Bazuin is a productive edge pass rusher who will contribute in 3-4 packages. Garrett Wolfe is an undersized, injury-prone running back who will be used in third down situations. Michael Okwo was a one-year starter who is tough and active. He will contribute as a backup inside linebacker and on special teams. Josh Beekman projects to center and will be groomed to take over for Olin Kreutz. Kevin Payne is a box-type safety. Corey Graham will back up at corner and play special teams. Corner Trumaine McBride and offensive tackle Aaron Brant are developmental players. **Grade: C+**

CINCINNATI BENGALS

The top corner in the draft, Leon Hall will be groomed to take over for Deltha O'Neal. Hall excels in man coverage with speed and quickness. He has good ball skills and is aggressive in run support. Kenny Irons is a slasher who fills a non-priority position. Marvin White is a raw talent who is a box-type safety. He fills a backup special teams role. Quarterback Jeff Rowe was a good value in the fifth round and will compete for the backup role with Doug Johnson. Rowe is tall, competitive and smart and is an above-average athlete. Matt Toeaina will help at defensive

Chris McGrath/Getty Images

tackle if he plays low and with leverage. Toeaina helps to fill the Bengals' biggest need, but a veteran free agent will also be brought in. Dan Santucci is versatile enough to back up at both center and guard. Strong safety Nedu Ndukwe is a good athlete who is more comfortable in zone coverage. **Grade: C+**

CLEVELAND BROWNS

The Browns filled three major needs the first day by selecting left tackle Joe Thomas and trading back up in the first round to draft Brady Quinn. Thomas was the consensus top offensive tackle and provides the running and passing game with an outstanding combination of size, athletic ability, and power. Quinn dropped to the 22nd pick mainly because Minnesota drafted Adrian Peterson and Miami decided on Ted Ginn Jr. The rest of the teams had young quarterbacks. But all's well that ends well, and the second-rated quarterback on most boards went to his boyhood favorite team. He has outstanding intangibles and productivity. Corner Eric Wright is a Cover 2 corner who will reroute receivers with his strength and hands. He possesses the physical tools to play on Sunday if he stays clear of the off-field problems. The second day of the draft provided Cleveland with an anchor left defensive end in Chase Pittman. Brandon McDonald, Melila Purcell, and Syndric Steptoe will be battling for a roster spot. **Grade: A-**

DALLAS COWBOYS

The Cowboys gave some thought to drafting Brady Quinn with their 22nd pick before trading with Cleveland. Tony Romo is their quarterback for now, so Dallas traded back into the first round to get pass rusher Anthony Spencer. In 2006 with Greg Ellis injured, protections were slid to DeMarcus Ware's side and neutralized him. Spencer was drafted to keep that from happening again. The high-motor, fast-twitch athlete is a natural outside 3-4 rush linebacker but can play in 4-3 packages. James Marten and Doug Free are a pair of solid offensive tackle selections for the future. Isaiah Stanback is a slash athlete, a former quarterback moving to wide receiver. Kicker Nick Folk will compete with Martin Gramatica. Courtney Brown and Alan Ball are two corners who will compete for backup positions in an area of need for the Cowboys. Fullback Deon Anderson is a developmental player. **Grade: B**

DENVER BRONCOS

The Broncos addressed their major needs on the defensive line early and often in their four-player draft. Denver traded up four spots to select pass rusher Jarvis Moss. The one-year starter has the height, speed and range to pressure the quarterback. He needs to add more bulk to stop the run. Tim Crowder, the run-stuffing defensive end from Texas, was picked in the second round. Physical enough to close the off-tackle gap, he is quick enough to be an effective pass rusher. Filling another defensive line need, the Broncos traded up to select tackle Marcus Thomas in the fourth round. Thomas was the top defensive tackle heading into the fall. He is always around the ball and is strong enough to get penetration and knock off the power running game. If he keeps his nose clean he could be the steal of the draft in the fourth round. Offensive tackle Ryan Harris filled another need. He plays with good knee bend and athletic ability. He is a good athlete with good feet. The Broncos got quality, not quantity. **Grade: B+**

DETROIT LIONS

Calvin Johnson is a future Pro Bowler. If free agent Mike Furrey can catch 98 passes, Mike Martz may see to it that Johnson catches 130. The huge receiver has a rare combination of measurables, athletic ability and intelligence. He is physical enough to break a tackle or catch the ball over the middle. Drew Stanton is the quarterback of the future if he regains his confidence from his shell-shocked college experience. Ikaika Alama-Francis is an athletic pass-rushing project who fits a need. Safety Gerald Alexander has played both corner and safety. He is a good prospect with inconsistent skills. A.J. Davis is a corner who adds depth, as does Mr. Irrelevant, Ramzee Robinson. Road-grading offensive guard Manuel Ramirez has the ability to start as a rookie. Linebacker Johnny Baldwin has the speed to play on the outside and will compete on special teams. **Grade: B**

GREEN BAY PACKERS

Defensive tackle Justin Harrell upgrades the interior of the Packer line with his size and strength. He is explosive and strong. Harrell only played three games in 2006 before suffering a torn biceps. He is a good competitor who plays stout in line. Running back Brandon Jackson is a fit because he played in the West Coast offense with the same terminology. He is talented but lacks long finish speed. Receiver James Jones was a curious pick in the third round. He had an excellent senior year but a poor combine showing. Aaron Rouse is a huge safety who will compete for a starting job. Allen Barbre is a green but athletic tackle. David Clowney adds depth to the receiving corps. Linebackers Korey Hall and Desmond Bishop are reserves who may compete on special teams. Mason Crosby, the best long-distance kicker in the draft, has the ability to beat out incumbent Dave Rayner if he regains the confidence he lost at the combine. DeShawn Wynn is the sleeper of this Packer draft because he has all the tools to be a feature back. Clark Harris does little to upgrade the tight end but could be the long snapper. **Grade: B**

HOUSTON TEXANS

Defensive tackle Amobi Okoye fills a major need on the Houston defensive line but will need to get stronger to hold up inside. Jacoby Jones was a reach in the third round. Generally, a developmental receiver is not drafted this high. He struggled catching balls over the middle and needs to improve his ability to get off press coverage. Fred Bennett will compete for the corner position opposite Dunta Robinson. Brandon Harrison is a big, active safety with good tackling ability. Brandon Frye is an ascending offensive tackle who is just learning the position. The former defensive end just needs technique work. Kasey Studdard will compete at guard, and Zach Diles is a productive linebacker who has a chance to make the team on his special teams play. **Grade: C**

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

The reigning Super Bowl Champions are one of the best at drafting players to fit their schemes. Wide receiver Anthony Gonzalez will replace the departed Brandon Stokley. Guard Tony Ugoh is athletic but raw. He will be groomed to succeed Tarik Glenn. Corner Daymeion Hughes lacks track speed but is a good fit for the Tampa 2 defensive scheme. Quinn Pitcock adds bulk to the interior of the defensive front. Brannon Condren and Michael Coe will back up in the secondary and contribute on special teams. Clint Session is a prototype Colt outside linebacker who is undersized and must make an impact on special teams to make the roster. Roy Hall is a workout warrior who will get a look at tight end and H-back. Defensive end Keyunta Dawson is an undersized edge pass rusher who looks to be headed to the practice squad because of the Colts' depth at his position. **Grade: B**

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

Free safety Reggie Nelson was a need pick after Deon Grant left via free agency and Gerald Sensabaugh had some off-field problems. Nelson is athletic, aggressive and tough. Justin Durant is an outstanding athlete who has rare speed and a closing burst to the ball carrier. He was drafted to add competition to the linebacker position and upgrade special teams coverage. Mike Walker is a good-sized athletic receiver who is a natural pass catcher. He may be the sleeper of the Jaguars' draft. Adam Podlesh is a punter with explosive leg strength. He is consistent and possesses good mental toughness. Brian Smith flashed pass-rush ability in college but must overcome an injury history. Offensive guard Uche Nwaneri is a good athlete who is naturally strong and adds needed depth. Free safety Josh Gattis, defensive tackle Derek Landri and receiver John Broussard will add depth and special teams help. Linebacker Chad Nkang is a high-motor tackling machine. Offensive tackle Andrew Carnahan has talent but was injured all of 2006. **Grade: B+**

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Dwayne Bowe fills a major need at wide receiver. He should be an immediate impact starter. Utility defensive lineman Turk McBride is a one-gap, up the field penetrator who is quick and explosive. Interior defensive tackle Tank Tyler has ability, strong hands, quickness and strength. However, he lacks consistency in his overall play. Kolby Smith is a backup running back. Justin Medlock is a left-footed soccer-style kicker who has been productive over his four-year career. He may be the sleeper of the Chiefs' draft. Herbert Taylor started for four years at tackle but is projected to move inside. He is a good fit for Kansas City because of his knee bend and ability to pull and run to the perimeter. Tight end Michael Allan is a small college athlete who has raw tools but needs more strength. **Grade: C-**

MIAMI DOLPHINS

New Miami coach Cam Cameron shocked draft observers by passing on Brady Quinn, opting for speed receiver and return specialist Ted Ginn Jr. Ginn did not work out at full speed this spring after his high ankle sprain in the national title game. Receiver/returner was a need pick after losing Wes Welker, but so was quarterback. The Dolphins came back in the second round and took draft climber John Beck. Beck's draft status was elevated by an outstanding combine workout and productive senior year. He is efficient, smart, a quick decision-maker and accurate. Samson Satele provides depth at center and has experience at guard. Lorenzo Booker is a third down back. Paul Soliai is a run-stuffing defensive tackle. Kelvin Smith adds depth to the linebacker corps. Brandon Fields kicks off and will compete for the punter's job. Reagan Mauia is a 280-pound former defensive tackle who will play fullback. Abraham Wright was a productive edge rusher but is projected to play outside linebacker. **Grade: C**

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

With only Tarvaris Jackson, last year's second-round selection, as the incumbent quarterback, conventional wisdom said to draft Brady Quinn. Brad Childress, the Vikings' head coach and a strong proponent of the running game option of the West Coast offense, deferred to Adrian Peterson. Peterson was clearly the top-rated running back in this draft and if healthy will be a huge boost to Minnesota's ball-control offense. Sidney Rice is a big vertical receiver. Marcus McCauley played like a first-round corner as a junior but struggled his senior year. Brian Robison has an explosive first step and will be a situation pass rusher. Aundrae Allison, a sure-handed receiver with rare speed, somehow lasted until the fifth round. He could prove to be the Vikings' draft sleeper pick. Linebacker Rufus Alexander, quarterback Tyler Thigpen and receiver Chandler Williams are reserve selections. **Grade: A-**

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Brandon Meriweather was a need pick and will help at corner and both safety positions. He will be an eventual starter at one of the three spots. You throw in the Randy Moss trade for a fourth-round pick and two first-round selections next year, and the Patriots are cooking with gas. Defensive tackle Kareem Brown has talent and should work into the team's rotation. Sixth-round pick Corey Hilliard could raise eyebrows as New England's sleeper selection. He graded out as one of the top offensive linemen at the combine and is strong enough to control a defender with his long arms and big hands. Justise Hairston is a productive small college running back. Offensive tackle Clint Oldenburg, linebackers Justin Rogers and Oscar Lua, corner Mike Richardson and guard Mike Elgin will be battling for roster spots. Adding Moss and extra draft picks next year moves the Patriots to an A grade. **Grade: A**

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Wide receiver Robert Meachem was an excellent value. Many clubs had him in the middle of the first round. He should make an immediate impact with his rare speed and smooth route-running. Usama Young is a speedy corner who will get a shot at right corner. Guard Andy Alleman has a chance to make it in the top eight linemen. Antonio Pittman is an insurance policy behind Deuce McAllister and Reggie Bush. Pittman is productive and durable. Jermon Bushrod is a talented small college tackle who must get used to the speed of the game. Corner David Jones is a sleeper who will compete for the nickel corner spot. He is smart and athletic. Marvin Mitchell adds depth at linebacker, a need position heading into the draft. **Grade: B**

NEW YORK GIANTS

The Giants had major problems in the secondary last year. Aaron Ross brings his gambling and physical style to plug one of the corner holes. Ross has good ball skills and the ability to play sideline to sideline. Steve Smith is a smooth and effective route-runner. He should be the third receiver once camp starts. Jay Alford was a reach in the third round but plays hard at defensive tackle. Zak DeOssie can play over a tight end and plays special teams. Kevin Boss is a project at tight end. Adam Koets is a smart and athletic tackle with good body control. He will figure in the offensive line mix. Michael Johnson has the size and athletic ability for the safety position. He needs to tackle better to make an impact. Ahmad Bradshaw will be stuck in a logjam at running back. **Grade: C**

NEW YORK JETS

Corner Darrelle Revis was a need pick to upgrade a revolving door at right corner. He was an early entry junior who has size and strength to reroute receivers in the 3-4 scheme. Generally, he is reliable in zone or man coverage. Physical in run support, Revis is a big-play corner who may contribute as a punt returner as well. David Harris was selected to fill an inside linebacker spot, giving the Jets the flexibility to move Jonathan Vilma outside in the 3-4 scheme. Jacob Bender will compete for a backup position at right tackle. Chansi Stuckey is a receiver who is quick and elusive with sure hands. **Grade: C**

OAKLAND RAIDERS

Oakland passed on Vince Young, Matt Leinart, and Jay Cutler last year and set their franchise back to the Stone Age with a Fred Flintstone-type offense. It now appears the Raiders have their quarterback of the future in JaMarcus Russell. The big, strong-armed Mobile, Ala., native is smooth and athletic. Russell has the ability to throw the deep ball accurately and will be a major force in the vertical passing game. Randy Moss was traded to New England, but former USC Trojan star Mike Williams was brought in to rejuvenate his career. Zach Miller, the top blocking and receiving tight end in the draft, was selected in the second round. Defensive ends Quentin Moses and Jay Richardson add depth and youth. Johnnie Lee Higgins and Johnathan Holland are speed receivers. Offensive tackle Mario Henderson is a developmental player. Huge running back Michael Bush may have a future once he gets over complications with his broken leg. **Grade: A-**

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Philadelphia had major needs on defense. Pass rushing ends, linebackers, and safety positions needed to be addressed early. Andy Reid decided on drafting Kevin Kolb after trading out of the first round. Kolb is already on their roster; his name is A.J. Feeley. Victor Abiamiri gives the defense a healthy pass rusher with size. Stewart Bradley was a solid choice and may have a chance to play if Chris Gocong can't transition to outside linebacker. Tony Hunt is a big downhill back who runs between the tackles. C.J. Gaddis has played both corner and safety. He needs technique work but has size, speed, and athletic ability. Tight end Brent Celek will be the third tight end. Rashad Barksdale played one year of Division I-AA football and is likely headed for the practice squad. Nate Ilaoa is a quick-footed fireplug who is a one-back set running back, not a fullback. **Grade: C-**

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Pittsburgh has a tradition of reloading after losing players in free agency. Joey Porter is gone to Miami. Insert playmaking Lawrence Timmons, a productive, raw talent who could play inside or outside linebacker. James Harrison will hold down the outside linebacker spot until Timmons is ready. LaMarr Woodley

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2007 NFL DRAFT ROUND 1

1	Oakland	JaMarcus Russell, QB, LSU
2	Detroit	Calvin Johnson, WR, Georgia Tech
3	Cleveland	Joe Thomas, T, Wisconsin
4	Tampa Bay	Gaines Adams, DE, Clemson
5	Arizona	Levi Brown, T, Penn State
6	Washington	LaRon Landry, FS, LSU
7	Minnesota	Adrian Peterson, RB, Oklahoma
8	Atlanta	Jamaal Anderson, DE, Arkansas
9	Miami	Ted Ginn Jr., WR, Ohio State
10	Houston	Amobi Okoye, DT, Louisville
11	San Francisco	Patrick Willis, ILB, Ole Miss
12	Buffalo	Marshawn Lynch, RB, California
13	St. Louis	Adam Carriker, DE, Nebraska
14	N.Y. Jets	Darrelle Revis, CB, Pittsburgh
15	Pittsburgh	Lawrence Timmons, OLB, Florida State
16	Green Bay	Justin Harrell, DT, Tennessee
17	Denver	Jarvis Moss, DE, Florida
18	Cincinnati	Leon Hall, CB, Michigan
19	Tennessee	Michael Griffin, FS, Texas
20	N.Y. Giants	Aaron Ross, CB, Texas
21	Jacksonville	Reggie Nelson, FS, Florida
22	Cleveland	Brady Quinn, QB, Notre Dame
23	Kansas City	Dwayne Bowe, WR, LSU
24	New England	Brandon Meriweather, FS, Miami (Fla.)
25	Carolina	Jon Beason, OLB, Miami (Fla.)
26	Dallas	Anthony Spencer, DE, Purdue
27	New Orleans	Robert Meachem, WR, Tennessee
28	San Francisco	Joe Staley, T, Central Michigan
29	Baltimore	Ben Grubbs, G, Auburn
30	San Diego	Craig Davis, WR, LSU
31	Chicago	Greg Olsen, TE, Miami (Fla.)
32	Indianapolis	Anthony Gonzalez, WR, Ohio State

is a productive pass-rushing defensive end/outside linebacker, as is fourth-round pick Ryan McBean. McBean may be the sleeper of the Steelers' draft. He's a fast-twitch, competitive player who has played both on the outside and interior. Matt Spaeth is a pass-catching big target who should be the third tight end. Daniel Sepulveda was one of the draft's top punters and will give Chris Gardocki a run for his money. Cameron Stephenson is a developmental guard. Receiver Dallas Baker was an excellent value in the seventh round. He's a big target who can make the clutch catch. **Grade: B+**

ST. LOUIS RAMS

The Rams needed to address the defensive line in the draft and filled one need in a big way with Adam Carriker. A power rusher, he can play end in a 4-3 or 3-4 scheme. He is strong enough in his upper and lower body to press the pocket and stuff the run. Brian Leonard is a utility back who will contribute as a backup to Steven Jackson and learn to block as a fullback. Jonathan Wade is an athletic and speedy corner who will be used in nickel and dime packages. Dustin Fry can play both center and guard. Clifton Ryan gives St. Louis more depth in the defensive line, as does Keith Jackson. Ken Shackleford is a developmental offensive tackle, and Derek Stanley is a practice squad candidate. **Grade: B**

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Craig Davis will have every opportunity to be a featured playmaking wide receiver. Davis is a vertical receiver with rare speed and athletic ability. He's a threat to run after the catch, but he needs work on his pass routes. Eric Weddle looked like a reach in the second round but will have a chance to start at strong safety. Anthony Waters was one of the top-rated linebackers heading into the fall before his knee injury and looks like a good pick in the third round. Scott Chandler is a pass-catching tight end who needs to elevate his blocking skills. Legedu Naanee is a big receiver who is very athletic. He had a strong combine showing. Linebacker Brandon Siler was a good value in the seventh round. **Grade: B**

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

San Francisco is quietly putting together the pieces to a solid foundation and team. Patrick Willis was the top linebacker in the draft. Joe Staley is an athletic left tackle who is an ascending player. Jason Hill is a sure-handed slot receiver with good speed. Ray McDonald is a first-round talent who has had two knee surgeries and may be played outside on the edge. Jay Moore is a productive pass-rushing end who had three sacks in the Senior Bowl. Dashon Goldson gives the 49ers depth at safety. Joe Cohen is an underrated defensive tackle with natural strength who can play inside or outside. Tarell Brown beat out first-rounder Aaron Ross at Texas as a junior but has some off-field red flags. If he keeps his nose clean, he will be a steal. Thomas Clayton is a between-the-tackles runner who may be headed to the practice squad. **Grade: A**

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

With no first-round pick, Seattle took cornerback Josh Wilson in the second round. Wilson has rare speed and outstanding athletic ability, but he needs to improve his tackling and ball skills. Brandon Mebane is a good athlete with explosive quickness and has a chance to be in the defensive tackle rotation. Baraka Atkins projects as a right defensive end and could play defensive tackle in some packages. Mansfield Wrotto is a physical former defensive tackle who is a developmental guard. Will Herring is an undersized linebacker who fits the Seahawks' scheme. Receiver Courtney Taylor has excellent hands and has very good speed as well. Jordan Kent is a tall vertical receiver and Steve Vallos is a versatile center/guard. **Grade: C**

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

It's been several years since Tampa Bay has had a disruptive pass rusher. Simeon Rice is still on the roster, but age and time have slowed him down. Gaines Adams was the best pass rusher in this draft, and with Monte Kiffin's schemes, he could get 10 sacks this year. Arron Sears is a road grader at guard but may get a look at right tackle. Sabby Piscitelli is a huge, big-hitting safety. Quincy Black is athletic and fast and will back up Derrick Brooks. Tanard Jackson will be getting work as a nickel corner. Greg Peterson is a developmental defensive end. Adam Hayward will make his mark on special teams as he is learning to play linebacker. Offensive tackle Chris Denman, corner Marcus Hamilton and running back Kenneth Darby will all battle to make the roster. **Grade: B+**

TENNESSEE TITANS

Free safety Michael Griffin was drafted to stabilize an uncertain secondary. Nick Harper was signed in free agency to play one corner. The Titans needed more help early in the draft. Chris Henry was a combine workout runner but rarely started at running back in college. This was clearly a reach pick. Paul Williams has a wealth of talent, and if he returns to his junior form, he will be a good target for Vince Young. Leroy Harris has talent but could have been drafted later. Receiver Chris Davis is not an upgrade over the pass catchers presently on the roster. Antonio Johnson will help on the defensive front and should earn a spot in the rotation. Joel Filani is a possession receiver. Ryan Smith will get a chance at corner, and Michael Otto may be the sleeper of the Titans' draft. He is a physical and scrappy offensive tackle with good feet. **Grade: C-**

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Washington needed a pass-rushing end or a run-stuffing tackle on defense. Because of their multi-million dollar mistake on Adam Archuleta, the Skins took LaRon Landry, the best safety in the draft. Landry will upgrade the defensive run game immediately with his physical play. Dallas Sartz will back up at outside linebacker. H.B. Blades is a two-down linebacker who is best playing tackle to tackle. Jordan Palmer is a third quarterback candidate, and tight end Tyler Ecker will back up Chris Cooley. **Grade: D**

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THE 2007 NFL DRAFT ROUNDS 2-7

ROUND 2

No.	Team	Player	Pos.	College
33	Arizona	Branch, Alan	DT	Michigan
34	Buffalo	Posluszny, Paul	OLB	Penn State
35	Tampa Bay	Sears, Arron	T	Tennessee
36	Philadelphia	Kolb, Kevin	QB	Houston
37	San Diego	Weddle, Eric	SS	Utah
38	Oakland	Miller, Zach	TE	Arizona State
39	Atlanta	Blalock, Justin	OT	Texas
40	Miami	Beck, John	QB	Brigham Young
41	Atlanta	Houston, Chris	CB	Arkansas
42	Indianapolis	Ugoh, Tony	G	Arkansas
43	Detroit	Stanton, Drew	QB	Michigan State
44	Minnesota	Rice, Sidney	WR	South Carolina
45	Carolina	Jarrett, Dwayne	WR	USC
46	Pittsburgh	Woodley, LaMarr	DE	Michigan
47	N.Y. Jets	Harris, David	ILB	Michigan
48	Jacksonville	Durant, Justin	ILB	Hampton
49	Cincinnati	Irons, Kenny	RB	Auburn
50	Tennessee	Henry, Chris	RB	Arizona
51	N.Y. Giants	Smith, Steve	WR	USC
52	St. Louis	Leonard, Brian	FB	Rutgers
53	Cleveland	Wright, Eric	CB	UNLV
54	Kansas City	McBride, Turk	DT	Tennessee
55	Seattle	Wilson, Josh	CB	Maryland
56	Denver	Crowder, Tim	DE	Texas
57	Philadelphia	Abiamiri, Victor	DE	Notre Dame
58	Detroit	Alama-Francis, Ikaika	DE	Hawaii
59	Carolina	Kalil, Ryan	C	USC
60	Miami	Satele, Samson	C	Hawaii
61	Detroit)	Alexander, Gerald	FS	Boise State
62	Chicago	Bazuin, Dan	DE	Central Michigan
63	Green Bay	Jackson, Brandon	RB	Nebraska
64	Tampa Bay	Piscitelli, Sabby	SS	Oregon State

ROUND 3

No.	Team	Player	Pos.	College
65	Oakland	Moses, Quentin	DE	Georgia
66	New Orleans	Young, Usama	CB	Kent State
67	Dallas	Marten, James	T	Boston College
68	Tampa Bay	Black, Quincy	OLB	New Mexico
69	Arizona	Davis, Buster	ILB	Florida State
70	Denver	Harris, Ryan	T	Notre Dame
71	Miami	Booker, Lorenzo	RB	Florida State
72	Minnesota	McCauley, Marcus	CB	Fresno State
73	Houston	Jones, Jacoby	WR	Lane
74	Baltimore	Figurs, Yamon	WR	Kansas State
75	Atlanta	Robinson, Laurent	WR	Illinois State
76	San Francisco	Hill, Jason	WR	Washington State
77	Pittsburgh	Spaeth, Matt	TE	Minnesota
78	Green Bay	Jones, James	WR	San Jose State
79	Jacksonville	Walker, Mike	WR	UCF
	Cincinnati	(Exercised in Supplemental Draft)		
80	Tennessee	Williams, Paul	WR	Fresno State
81	N.Y. Giants	Alford, Jay	DT	Penn State
82	Kansas City	Tyler, DeMarcus 'Tank'	DT	NC State
83	Carolina	Johnson, Charles	DE	Georgia
84	St. Louis	Wade, Jonathan	CB	Tennessee
85	Seattle	Mebane, Brandon	DT	California
86	Baltimore	Yanda, Marshal	G	Iowa
87	Philadelphia	Bradley, Stewart	OLB	Nebraska
88	New Orleans	Alleman, Andy	G	Akron
89	Green Bay	Rouse, Aaron	SS	Virginia Tech
90	Philadelphia	Hunt, Tony	RB	Penn State
91	Oakland	Henderson, Mario	T	Florida State
92	Buffalo	Edwards, Trent	QB	Stanford
93	Chicago	Wolfe, Garrett	RB	Northern Illinois
94	Chicago	Okwo, Michael	ILB	Stanford
95	Indianapolis	Hughes, Daymeion	CB	California
96	San Diego	Waters, Anthony	ILB	Clemson
97	San Francisco	McDonald, Ray	DT	Florida
98	Indianapolis	Pitcock, Quinn	DT	Ohio State
99	Oakland	Higgins, Johnnie Lee	WR	UTEP

ROUND 4

No.	Team	Player	Pos.	College
100	Oakland	Bush, Michael	RB	Louisville
101	Jacksonville	Podlesh, Adam	P	Maryland
102	Minnesota	Robison, Brian	DE	Texas
103	Dallas	Stanback, Isaiah	QB	Washington
104	San Francisco	Moore, Jay	DE	Nebraska
105	Detroit	Davis, A.J.	CB	NC State
106	Tampa Bay	Jackson, Tanard	CB	Syracuse
107	New Orleans	Pittman, Antonio	RB	Ohio State
108	Miami	Soliai, Paul	DT	Utah
109	Atlanta	Nicholas, Stephen	OLB	South Florida
110	Oakland	Bowie, John	CB	Cincinnati
111	Buffalo	Wright, Dwayne	RB	Fresno State
112	Pittsburgh	Sepulveda, Daniel	P	Baylor
113	Jacksonville	Smith, Brian	DE	Missouri
114	Cincinnati	White, Marvin	FS	TCU
115	Tennessee	Harris, Leroy	C	NC State
116	N.Y. Giants	DeOssie, Zak	OLB	Brown
117	Detroit	Ramirez, Manuel	G	Texas Tech
118	Carolina	Robinson, Ryne	WR	Miami (Ohio)
119	Green Bay	Barbre, Allen	T	Missouri So. St.
120	Seattle	Atkins, Baraka	DE	Miami (Fla.)
121	Denver	Thomas, Marcus	DT	Florida
122	Dallas	Free, Doug	T	Northern Illinois
123	Houston	Bennett, Fred	CB	South Carolina
124	Seattle	Wrotto, Mansfield	G	Georgia Tech
125	New Orleans	Bushrod, Jermon	T	Towson
126	San Francisco	Goldson, Dashon	FS	Washington
127	New England	Brown, Kareem	DT	Miami (Fla.)
128	Tennessee	Davis, Chris	WR	Florida State
129	San Diego	Chandler, Scott	TE	Iowa
130	Chicago	Beekman, Josh	G	Boston College
131	Indianapolis	Condren, Brannon	FS	Troy
132	Pittsburgh	McBean, Ryan	DE	Oklahoma State
133	Atlanta	Milner, Martrez	TE	Georgia
134	Baltimore	Barnes, Antwan	OLB	FIU
135	San Francisco	Cohen, Joe	DT	Florida
136	Indianapolis	Session, Clint	OLB	Pittsburgh
137	Baltimore	McClain, Le'Ron	FB	Alabama

ROUND 5

No.	Team	Player	Pos.	College
138	Oakland	Richardson, Jay	DE	Ohio State
139	St. Louis	Fry, Dustin	C	Clemson
140	Cleveland	McDonald, Brandon	CB	Memphis
141	Tampa Bay	Peterson, Greg	DE	NC Central
142	Arizona	Breaston, Steve	WR	Michigan
143	Washington	Sartz, Dallas	OLB	USC
144	Houston	Harrison, Brandon	SS	Stanford
145	New Orleans	Jones, David	CB	Wingate
146	Minnesota	Allison, Aundrae	WR	East Carolina
147	San Francisco	Brown, Tarell	CB	Texas
148	Kansas City	Smith, Kolby	RB	Louisville
149	Jacksonville	Nwaneri, Uche	G	Purdue
150	Jacksonville	Gattis, Josh	FS	Wake Forest
151	Cincinnati	Rowe, Jeff	QB	Nevada
152	Tennessee	Johnson, Antonio	DT	Mississippi State
153	N.Y. Giants	Boss, Kevin	TE	Western Oregon
154	St. Louis	Ryan, Clifton	DT	Michigan State
155	Carolina	Rosario, Dante	TE	Oregon
156	Pittsburgh	Stephenson, Cameron	G	Rutgers
157	Green Bay	Clowney, David	WR	Virginia Tech
158	Detroit	Baldwin, Johnny	OLB	Alabama A&M
159	Philadelphia	Gaddis, C.J.	FS	Clemson
160	Kansas City	Medlock, Justin	K	UCLA
161	Seattle	Herring, Will	OLB	Auburn
162	Philadelphia	Celek, Brent	TE	Cincinnati
163	Houston	Frye, Brandon	OT	Virginia Tech
164	Carolina	Shaw, Tim	ILB	Penn State
165	Oakland	Frampton, Eric	SS	Washington State
166	Jacksonville	Landri, Derek	DT	Notre Dame
167	Chicago	Payne, Kevin	FS	Louisiana-Monroe
168	Chicago	Graham, Corey	CB	New Hampshire
169	Indianapolis	Hall, Roy	WR	Ohio State
170	Pittsburgh	Gay, William	CB	Louisville
171	New England	Oldenburg, Clint	T	Colorado State
172	San Diego	Naanee, Legedu	WR	Boise State
173	Indianapolis	Coe, Michael	CB	Alabama State
174	Baltimore	Smith, Troy	QB	Ohio State

ROUND 6

No.	Team	Player	Pos.	College
175	Oakland	O'Neal, Oren	FB	Arkansas State
176	Minnesota	Alexander, Rufus	OLB	Oklahoma
177	N.Y. Jets	Bender, Jacob	T	Nicholls State
178	Dallas	Folk, Nick	K	Arizona
179	Washington	Blades, H.B.	ILB	Pittsburgh
180	New England	Rogers, Justin	OLB	SMU
181	Miami	Mauia, Reagan	FB	Hawaii
182	Tampa Bay	Hayward, Adam	OLB	Portland State
183	Houston	Studdard, Kasey	G	Texas
184	Buffalo	Wendling, John	FS	Wyoming
185	Atlanta	Lewis, Trey	DT	Washburn
186	San Francisco	Clayton, Thomas	RB	Kansas State
187	Cincinnati	Toeaina, Matt	DT	Oregon
188	Tennessee	Filani, Joel	WR	Texas Tech
189	N.Y. Giants	Koets, Adam	T	Oregon State
190	St. Louis	Shackleford, Ken	T	Georgia
191	Green Bay	Hall, Korey	ILB	Boise State
192	Green Bay	Bishop, Desmond	ILB	California
193	Green Bay	Crosby, Mason	K	Colorado
194	Atlanta	Irons, David	CB	Auburn
195	Dallas	Anderson, Deon	FB	Connecticut
196	Kansas City	Taylor, Herbert	OT	TCU
197	Seattle	Taylor, Courtney	WR	Auburn
198	Atlanta	Datish, Doug	C	Ohio State
199	Miami	Mormino, Drew	C	Central Michigan
200	Cleveland	Purcell, Melila	DE	Hawaii
201	Philadelphia	Barksdale, Rashad	CB	Albany
202	New England	Richardson, Mike	CB	Notre Dame
203	Atlanta	Stone, Daren	SS	Maine
204	Tennessee	Ford, Jacob	DE	Central Arkansas
205	Washington	Palmer, Jordan	QB	UTEP
206	Tennessee	Smith, Ryan	CB	Florida
207	Baltimore	Burgess, Prescott	OLB	Michigan
208	New England	Hairston, Justise	RB	Central Connecticut
209	New England	Hilliard, Corey	T	Oklahoma State
210	Seattle	Kent, Jordan	WR	Oregon

ROUND 7

No.	Team	Player	Pos.	College
211	New England	Lua, Oscar	ILB	USC
212	Dallas	Brown, Courtney	CB	Cal Poly
213	Cleveland	Pittman, Chase	DE	LSU
214	Tampa Bay	Denman, Chris	T	Fresno State
215	Arizona	Patrick, Ben	TE	Delaware
216	Washington	Ecker, Tyler	TE	Michigan
217	Minnesota	Thigpen, Tyler	QB	Coastal Carolina
218	Houston	Diles, Zach	ILB	Kansas State
219	Miami	Smith, Kelvin	ILB	Syracuse
220	New Orleans	Mitchell, Marvin	ILB	Tennessee
221	Chicago	McBride, Trumaine	CB	Ole Miss
222	Buffalo	Schouman, Derek	FB	Boise State
223	Tennessee	Otto, Michael	T	Purdue
224	N.Y. Giants	Johnson, Michael	SS	Arizona
225	Miami	Fields, Brandon	P	Michigan State
226	Carolina	Wilson, C.J.	CB	Baylor
227	Pittsburgh	Baker, Dallas	WR	Florida
228	Green Bay	Wynn, DeShawn	RB	Florida
229	Jacksonville	Broussard, John	WR	San Jose State
230	Cincinnati	Santucci, Dan	G	Notre Dame
231	Kansas City	Allan, Michael	TE	Whitworth
232	Seattle	Vallos, Steve	G	Wake Forest
233	Minnesota	Williams, Chandler	WR	FIU
234	Cleveland	Steptoe, Syndric	WR	Arizona
235	N.Y. Jets	Stuckey, Chansi	WR	Clemson
236	Philadelphia	Ilaoa, Nate	FB	Hawaii
237	Dallas	Ball, Alan	CB	Illinois
238	Miami	Wright, Abraham	DE	Colorado
239	Buffalo	Ah You, C.J.	DE	Oklahoma
240	San Diego	Siler, Brandon	ILB	Florida
241	Chicago	Brant, Aaron	T	Iowa State
242	Indianapolis	Dawson, Keyunta	DE	Texas Tech
243	Green Bay	Harris, Clark	TE	Rutgers
244	Atlanta	Snelling, Jason	RB	Virginia
245	Tampa Bay	Hamilton, Marcus	CB	Virginia
246	Tampa Bay	Darby, Kenneth	RB	Alabama
247	New England	Elgin, Mike	G	Iowa
248	St. Louis	Jackson, Keith	DT	Arkansas
249	St. Louis	Stanley, Derek	WR	Wisc.-Whitewater
250	N.Y. Giants	Bradshaw, Ahmad	RB	Marshall
251	Jacksonville	Nkang, Chad	ILB	Elon
252	Jacksonville	Carnahan, Andrew	T	Arizona State
253	Cincinnati	Ndukwe, Nedu	SS	Notre Dame
254	Oakland	Holland, Johnathan	WR	Louisiana Tech
255	Detroit	Robinson, Ramzee	CB	Alabama

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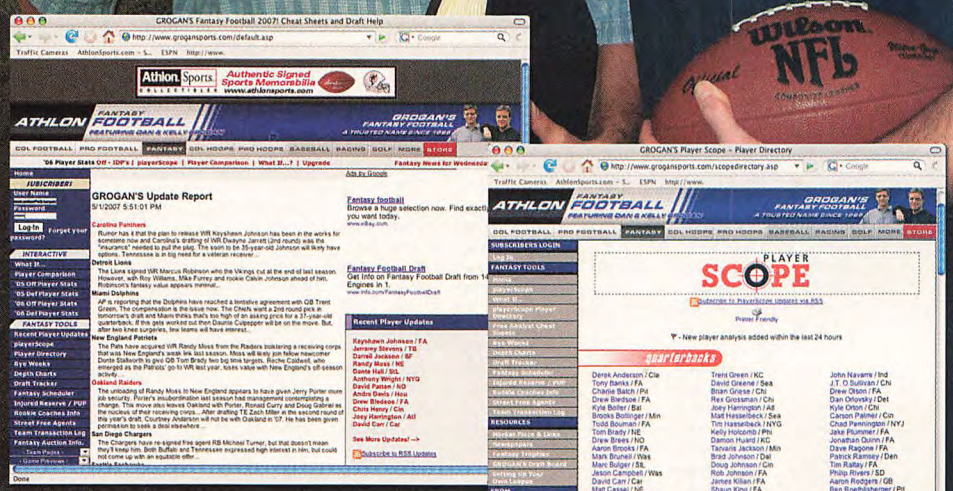
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2006 TEAM STATS

AFC OFFENSE

	Scoring Pts/G	TDs	FGs	Total Yds/G	Rushing Yds/G	Passing Yds/G	3rd%	TOP
BALTIMORE	22.1	38	28	317.0	102.3	214.7	41.2	32:49
BUFFALO	18.8	33	23	266.9	97.0	169.9	31.7	28:04
CINCINNATI	23.3	43	25	341.4	101.8	239.6	35.8	28:34
CLEVELAND	14.9	25	21	264.6	83.4	181.1	33.5	29:21
DENVER	19.9	34	27	309.4	134.5	174.9	37.0	29:50
HOUSTON	16.7	30	19	279.1	105.4	173.6	38.9	29:14
INDIANAPOLIS	26.7	50	26	379.4	110.1	269.2	56.1	29:32
JACKSONVILLE	23.2	42	26	338.9	158.8	180.1	39.2	32:11
KANSAS CITY	20.7	37	24	321.4	133.9	187.5	40.6	30:06
MIAMI	16.2	26	26	310.0	104.6	205.4	37.6	30:01
NEW ENGLAND	24.1	46	20	335.6	123.1	212.5	42.5	31:35
NEW YORK	19.8	35	24	305.7	108.6	197.1	43.8	31:03
OAKLAND	10.5	16	18	246.2	94.9	151.2	36.3	28:14
PITTSBURGH	22.1	42	20	357.8	124.5	233.3	42.9	31:13
SAN DIEGO	30.8	59	26	365.0	161.1	203.9	43.2	31:39
TENNESSEE	20.2	36	22	300.6	138.4	162.2	32.7	27:17

AFC DEFENSE

	Pts/G	TDs	FGs	Total Yds/G	Rushing Yds/G	Passing Yds/G	Sack	3rd%	Take
BALTIMORE	12.6	21	17	264.1	75.9	188.2	60	28.8	40
BUFFALO	19.4	35	22	329.6	140.9	188.7	40	36.6	24
CINCINNATI	20.7	40	18	355.1	116.4	238.6	35	41.7	31
CLEVELAND	22.2	40	26	344.8	142.2	202.6	28	43.9	27
DENVER	19.1	29	34	326.4	113.3	213.1	35	36.7	30
HOUSTON	22.9	42	25	337.5	122.2	215.2	28	44.4	22
INDIANAPOLIS	22.5	41	24	332.2	173.0	159.2	25	47.1	26
JACKSONVILLE	17.1	32	17	283.6	91.2	192.4	35	36.6	24
KANSAS CITY	19.7	34	26	328.9	120.5	208.4	32	39.2	30
MIAMI	17.7	31	22	289.1	101.1	187.9	47	38.0	27
NEW ENGLAND	14.8	24	22	294.4	94.2	200.2	44	35.9	35
NEW YORK	18.4	34	18	331.6	130.2	201.4	35	36.5	25
OAKLAND	20.8	34	31	284.8	134.0	150.8	34	35.7	23
PITTSBURGH	19.7	36	21	300.3	88.2	212.1	39	39.3	29
SAN DIEGO	18.9	33	23	301.6	100.8	200.8	61	36.6	28
TENNESSEE	25.0	46	27	369.7	144.6	225.1	26	40.7	28

NFC OFFENSE

	Scoring Pts/G	TDs	FGs	Total Yds/G	Rushing Yds/G	Passing Yds/G	3rd%	TOP
ARIZONA	19.6	33	28	312.5	83.6	228.9	39.2	29:59
ATLANTA	18.2	32	23	331.9	183.7	148.2	35.9	29:48
CAROLINA	16.9	28	24	307.7	103.7	204.0	31.1	30:12
CHICAGO	26.7	47	32	324.9	119.9	205.1	36.8	30:34
DALLAS	26.6	52	20	360.8	121.0	239.8	48.8	31:02
DETROIT	19.1	31	29	309.3	70.6	238.8	32.6	27:41
GREEN BAY	18.8	32	26	341.1	103.9	237.2	39.2	30:45
MINNESOTA	17.6	32	21	308.9	113.8	195.2	33.0	31:37
NEW ORLEANS	25.8	49	23	391.5	110.1	281.4	44.9	31:53
NEW YORK	22.2	41	23	325.9	134.8	191.1	37.9	29:35
PHILADELPHIA	24.9	49	18	381.4	124.0	257.4	42.1	28:38
SAN FRANCISCO	18.6	30	29	303.8	135.8	168.0	34.4	28:37
SEATTLE	20.9	37	25	311.1	120.2	190.9	37.9	29:48
ST. LOUIS	22.9	39	32	360.4	112.8	247.6	37.4	31:07
TAMPA BAY	13.2	23	17	270.1	95.2	174.9	36.9	28:06
WASHINGTON	19.2	34	22	327.7	138.5	189.2	37.4	29:59

NFC DEFENSE

	Pts/G	TDs	FGs	Total Yds/G	Rushing Yds/G	Passing Yds/G	Sack	3rd%	Take
ARIZONA	24.3	42	31	349.4	118.6	230.9	38	41.3	33
ATLANTA	20.5	37	23	332.8	103.6	229.2	37	42.0	26
CAROLINA	19.1	33	24	296.1	108.6	187.5	41	31.5	22
CHICAGO	15.9	29	18	294.1	99.4	194.8	40	31.0	44
DALLAS	21.9	40	22	322.8	103.7	219.1	34	43.9	31
DETROIT	24.9	44	30	345.6	125.6	220.0	30	43.5	30
GREEN BAY	22.9	41	26	320.9	114.1	206.8	46	32.6	33
MINNESOTA	20.4	32	34	300.2	61.6	238.6	30	34.4	36
NEW ORLEANS	20.1	40	14	307.3	128.9	178.4	38	34.7	19
NEW YORK	22.6	42	22	342.4	114.4	228.1	32	42.9	28
PHILADELPHIA	20.5	36	26	328.1	136.4	191.7	40	37.4	29
SAN FRANCISCO	25.8	46	30	344.2	121.0	223.2	34	44.4	27
SEATTLE	21.3	39	23	330.3	126.8	203.5	41	36.5	26
ST. LOUIS	23.8	46	19	335.1	145.4	189.7	34	45.4	32
TAMPA BAY	22.1	41	22	329.4	119.8	209.6	25	37.8	20
WASHINGTON	23.5	41	30	355.5	137.3	218.2	19	43.7	12

2006 NFL STANDINGS

AFC

EAST	W–L	PCT	PF	PA	HOME	ROAD	DIV
New England	12-4	.750	385	237	5-3	7-1	4-2
N.Y. Jets	10-6	.625	316	295	4-4	6-2	4-2
Buffalo	7-9	.438	300	311	4-4	3-5	3-3
Miami	6-10	.375	260	283	4-4	2-6	1-5
NORTH	**W–L**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**	**HOME**	**ROAD**	**DIV**
Baltimore	13-3	.812	353	201	7-1	6-2	5-1
Cincinnati	8-8	.500	373	331	4-4	4-4	4-2
Pittsburgh	8-8	.500	353	315	5-3	3-5	3-3
Cleveland	4-12	.250	238	356	2-6	2-6	0-6
SOUTH	**W–L**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**	**HOME**	**ROAD**	**DIV**
Indianapolis	12-4	.750	427	360	8-0	4-4	3-3
Tennessee	8-8	.500	324	400	4-4	4-4	4-2
Jacksonville	8-8	.500	371	274	6-2	2-6	2-4
Houston	6-10	.375	267	366	4-4	2-6	3-3
WEST	**W–L**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**	**HOME**	**ROAD**	**DIV**
San Diego	14-2	.875	492	303	8-0	6-2	5-1
Kansas City	9-7	.562	331	315	6-2	3-5	4-2
Denver	9-7	.562	319	305	4-4	5-3	3-3
Oakland	2-14	.125	168	332	2-6	0-8	0-6

NFC

EAST	W–L	PCT	PF	PA	HOME	ROAD	DIV
Philadelphia	10-6	.625	398	328	5-3	5-3	5-1
Dallas	9-7	.562	425	350	4-4	5-3	2-4
N.Y. Giants	8-8	.500	355	362	3-5	5-3	4-2
Washington	5-11	.312	307	376	3-5	2-6	1-5
NORTH	**W–L**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**	**HOME**	**ROAD**	**DIV**
Chicago	13-3	.812	427	255	6-2	7-1	5-1
Green Bay	8-8	.500	301	366	3-5	5-3	5-1
Minnesota	6-10	.375	282	327	3-5	3-5	2-4
Detroit	3-13	.188	305	398	2-6	1-7	0-6
SOUTH	**W–L**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**	**HOME**	**ROAD**	**DIV**
New Orleans	10-6	.625	413	322	4-4	6-2	4-2
Carolina	8-8	.500	270	305	4-4	4-4	5-1
Atlanta	7-9	.438	292	328	3-5	4-4	3-3
Tampa Bay	4-12	.250	211	353	3-5	1-7	0-6
WEST	**W–L**	**PCT**	**PF**	**PA**	**HOME**	**ROAD**	**DIV**
Seattle	9-7	.562	335	341	5-3	4-4	3-3
St. Louis	8-8	.500	367	381	4-4	4-4	2-4
San Francisco	7-9	.438	298	412	4-4	3-5	3-3
Arizona	5-11	.312	314	389	3-5	2-6	4-2

2006 POSTSEASON

AFC Wild Card Playoff Games
INDIANAPOLIS 23, Kansas City 8
NEW ENGLAND 37, N.Y. Jets 16

NFC Wild Card Playoff Games
SEATTLE 21, Dallas 20
PHILADELPHIA 23, N.Y. Giants 20

AFC Divisional Playoff Games
INDIANAPOLIS 15, Baltimore 6
NEW ENGLAND 24, San Diego 21

NFC Divisional Playoff Games
NEW ORLEANS 27, Philadelphia 24
CHICAGO 27, Seattle 24 (OT)

AFC Championship Game
INDIANAPOLIS 38, New England 34

NFC Championship Game
CHICAGO 39, New Orleans 14

Super Bowl XLI
INDIANAPOLIS 29, Chicago 17

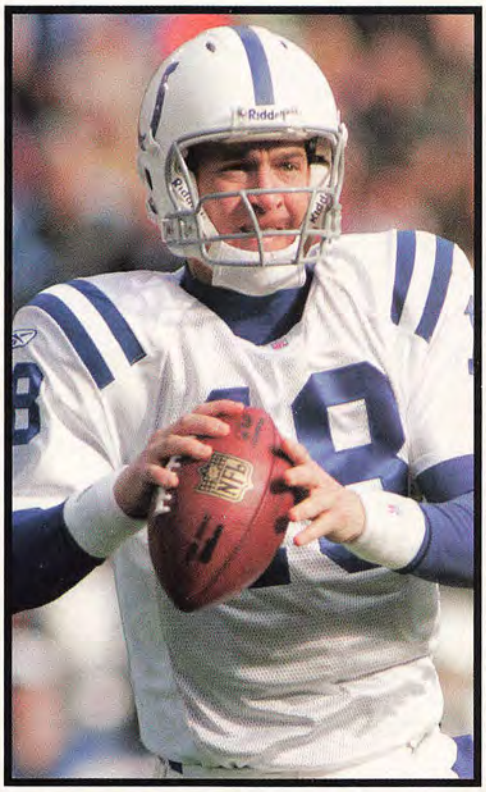
2006 NFL INDIVIDUAL OFFENSIVE STATS

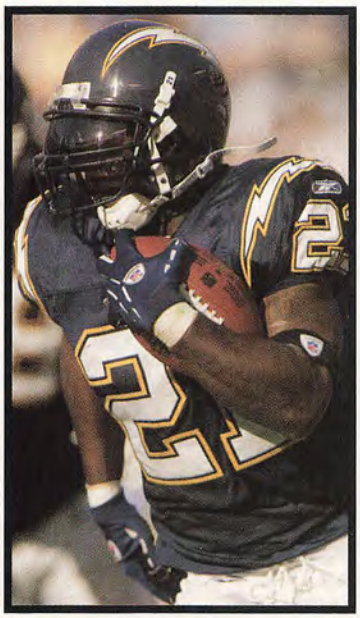
AFC PASSING LEADERS

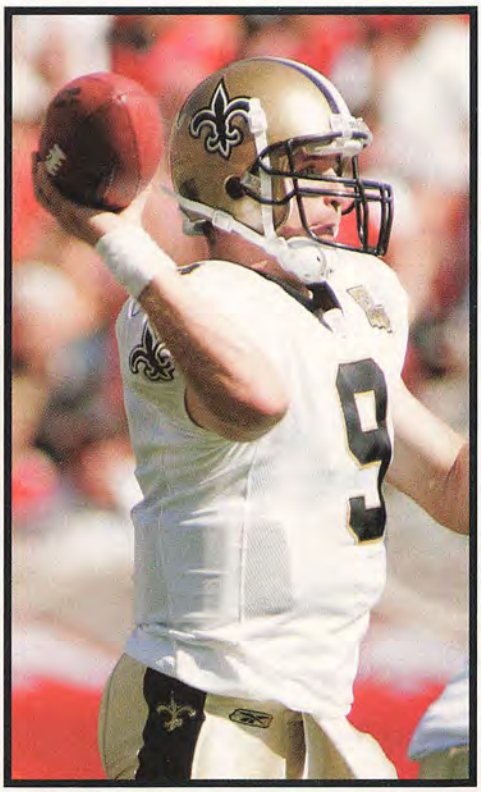
	Yds	Att	Cmp	TDs	Ints	Long	Rating
Peyton Manning, IND	4,397	557	362	31	9	68	101.0
Damon Huard, KC	1,878	244	148	11	1	78	98.0
Carson Palmer, CIN	4,035	520	324	28	13	74	93.9
Philip Rivers, SD	3,388	460	284	22	9	57	92.0
Tom Brady, NE	3,529	516	319	24	12	62	87.9
J.P. Losman, BUF	3,051	429	268	19	14	83	84.9
Chad Pennington, NYJ	3,352	485	313	17	16	71	82.6
Steve McNair, BAL	3,050	468	295	16	12	87	82.5
David Carr, HOU	2,767	442	302	11	12	53	82.1
David Garrard, JAC	1,735	241	145	10	9	49	80.5
Ben Roethlisberger, PIT	3,513	469	280	18	23	67	75.4
Charlie Frye, CLE	2,454	392	252	10	17	75	72.2
Jake Plummer, DEN	1,994	317	175	11	13	83	68.8
Joey Harrington, MIA	2,236	388	223	12	15	48	68.2
Vince Young, TEN	2,199	357	184	12	13	53	66.7
Andrew Walter, OAK	1,677	276	147	3	13	51	55.8

NFC PASSING LEADERS

	Yds	Att	Cmp	TDs	Ints	Long	Rating
Drew Brees, NO	4,418	554	356	26	11	86	96.2
Donovan McNabb, PHI	2,647	316	180	18	6	87	95.5
Tony Romo, DAL	2,903	337	220	19	13	56	95.1
Marc Bulger, STL	4,301	588	370	24	8	67	92.9
Mark Brunell, WAS	1,789	260	162	8	4	74	86.5
Jake Delhomme, CAR	2,805	431	263	17	11	72	82.6
Jon Kitna, DET	4,208	596	372	21	22	60	79.9
Eli Manning, NYG	3,244	522	301	24	18	55	77.0
Matt Hasselbeck, SEA	2,442	371	210	18	15	72	76.0
Michael Vick, ATL	2,474	388	204	20	13	55	75.7
Alex Smith, SF	2,890	442	257	16	16	75	74.8
Matt Leinart, ARI	2,547	377	214	11	12	58	74.0
Rex Grossman, CHI	3,193	480	262	23	20	62	73.9
Brett Favre, GB	3,885	613	343	18	18	82	72.7
Brad Johnson, MIN	2,750	439	270	9	15	46	72.0
Bruce Gradkowski, TB	1,661	328	177	9	9	53	65.9







AFC RUSHING LEADERS

	Yards	Att.	Avg.	TDs	Long
LaDainian Tomlinson, SD	1,815	348	5.2	28	85
Larry Johnson, KC	1,789	416	4.3	17	47
Willie Parker, PIT	1,494	337	4.4	13	76
Rudi Johnson, CIN	1,309	341	3.8	12	22
Travis Henry, TEN	1,211	270	4.5	7	70
Fred Taylor, JAC	1,146	231	5.0	5	76
Jamal Lewis, BAL	1,132	314	3.6	9	52
Joseph Addai, IND	1,081	226	4.8	7	41
Tatum Bell, DEN	1,025	233	4.4	2	51
Ronnie Brown, MIA	1,008	241	4.2	5	47
Willis McGahee, BUF	990	259	3.8	6	57
Maurice Jones-Drew, JAC	941	166	5.7	13	74
Corey Dillon, NE	812	199	4.1	13	50
Reuben Droughns, CLE	758	220	3.4	4	22
Laurence Maroney, NE	745	175	4.3	6	41
Mike Bell, DEN	677	157	4.3	8	48
Justin Fargas, OAK	659	178	3.7	1	48
Leon Washington, NYJ	650	151	4.3	4	23

NFC RUSHING LEADERS

	Yards	Att.	Avg.	TDs	Long
Frank Gore, SF	1,695	312	5.4	8	72
Tiki Barber, NYG	1,662	327	5.1	5	55
Steven Jackson, STL	1,528	346	4.4	13	59
Brian Westbrook, PHI	1,217	240	5.1	7	71
Chester Taylor, MIN	1,216	303	4.0	6	95
Thomas Jones, CHI	1,210	296	4.1	6	30
Edgerrin James, ARI	1,159	337	3.4	6	18
Ladell Betts, WAS	1,154	245	4.7	4	26
Warrick Dunn, ATL	1,140	286	4.0	4	90
Julius Jones, DAL	1,084	267	4.1	4	77
Ahman Green, GB	1,059	266	4.0	5	70
Deuce McAllister, NO	1,057	244	4.3	10	57
Michael Vick, ATL	1,039	123	8.4	2	51
DeShaun Foster, CAR	897	227	4.0	3	43
Shaun Alexander, SEA	896	252	3.6	7	33
Cadillac Williams, TB	798	225	3.5	1	38
Kevin Jones, DET	689	181	3.8	6	52
Marion Barber, DAL	654	135	4.8	14	25

Gore, Tomlinson: Peter Brouillet; Brees, Manning: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

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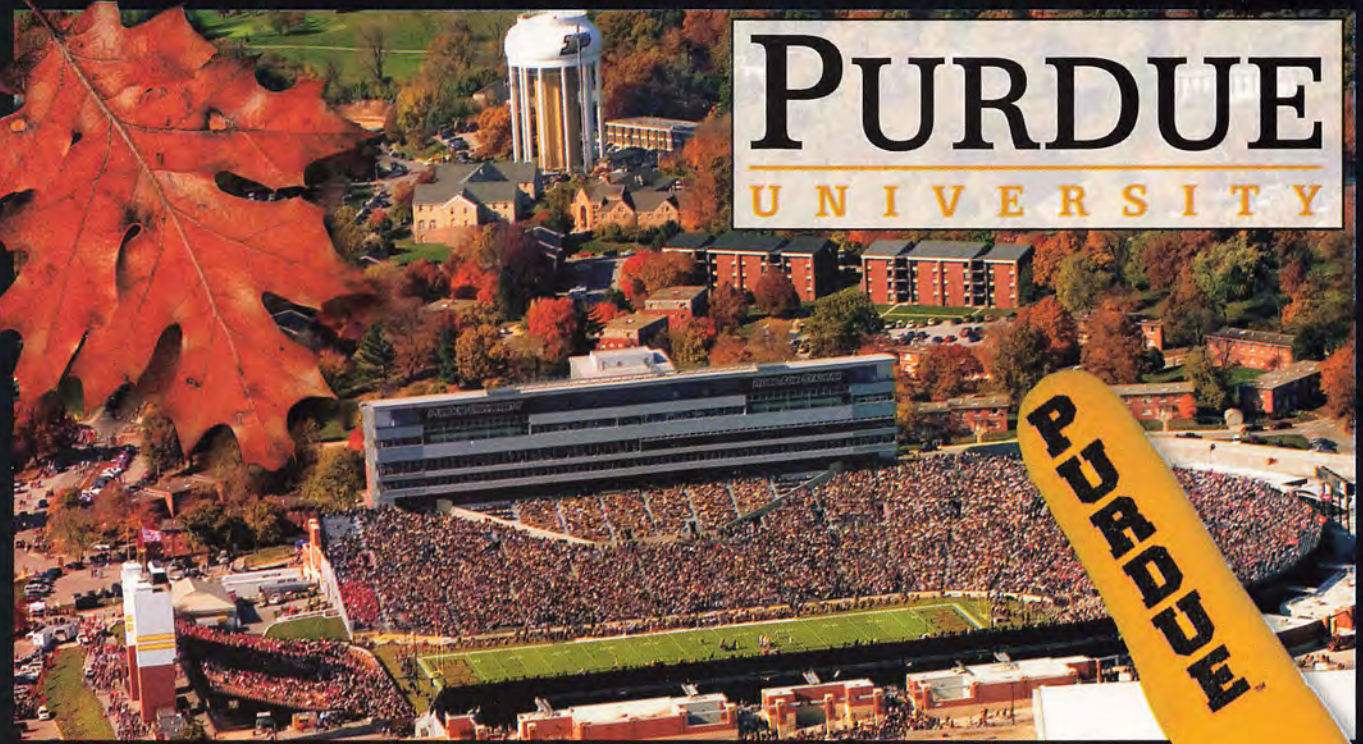

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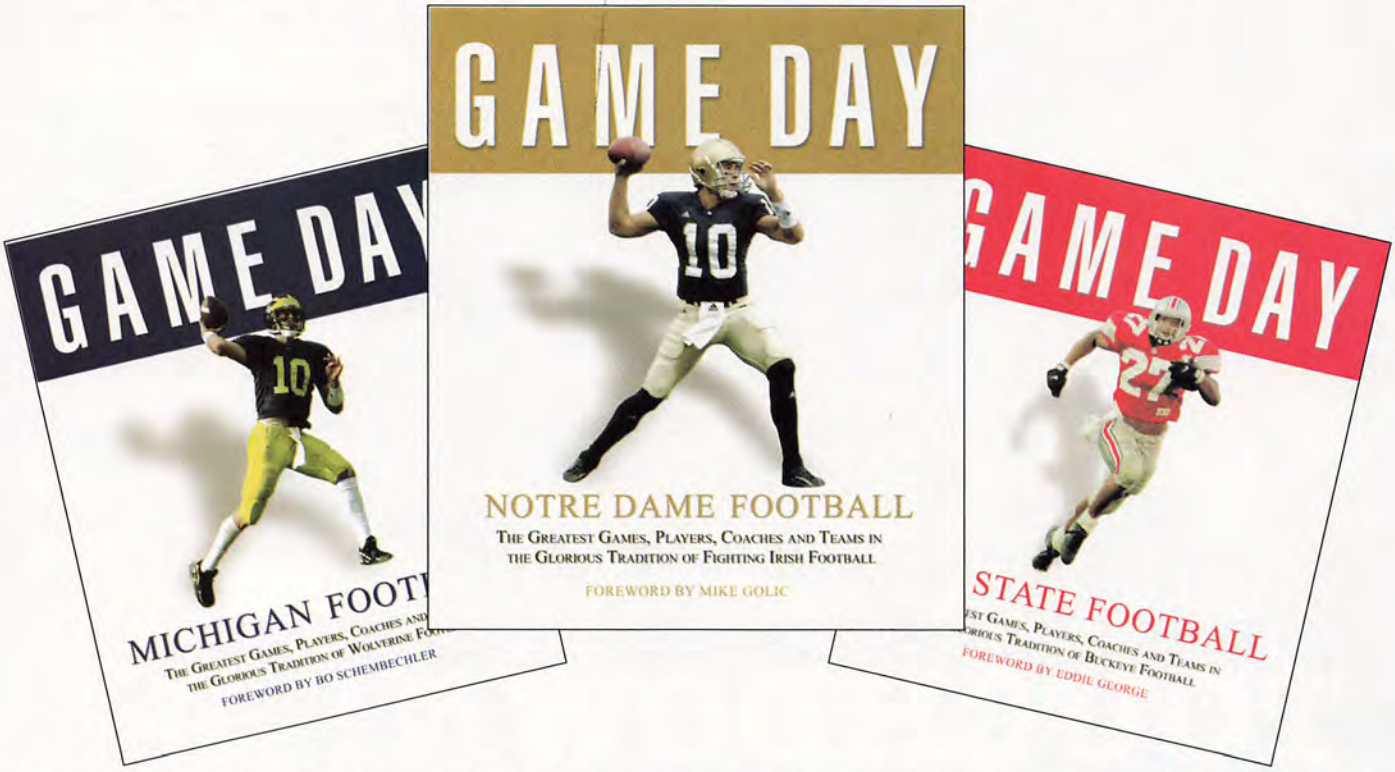
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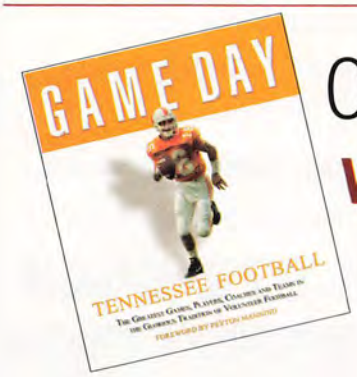

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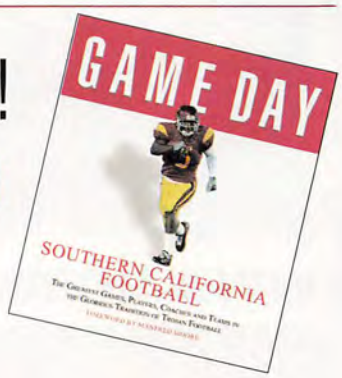

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AFC RECEIVING LEADERS

	Rec	Yds	Avg	TDs	Long
Andre Johnson, HOU	103	1,147	11.1	5	53
Marvin Harrison, IND	95	1,366	14.4	12	68
Laveranues Coles, NYJ	91	1,098	12.1	6	58
T.J. Houshmandzadeh, CIN	90	1,081	12.0	9	40
Kellen Winslow, CLE	89	875	9.8	3	40
Chad Johnson, CIN	87	1,369	15.7	7	74
Reggie Wayne, IND	86	1,310	15.2	9	51
Lee Evans, BUF	82	1,292	15.8	8	83
Jerricho Cotchery, NYJ	82	961	11.7	6	71
Hines Ward, PIT	74	975	13.2	6	70
Todd Heap, BAL	73	765	10.5	6	30
Tony Gonzalez, KC	73	900	12.3	5	57
Antonio Gates, SD	71	924	13.0	9	57
Javon Walker, DEN	69	1,084	15.7	8	83
Derrick Mason, BAL	68	750	11.0	2	38
Wes Welker, MIA	67	687	10.3	1	38
Mark Clayton, BAL	67	939	14.0	5	87
Randy McMichael, MIA	62	640	10.3	3	24
Ronald Curry, OAK	62	727	11.7	1	39

AFC SCORING, KICKERS

	FGM	FGA	Long	XPA	XPM	Pts
Matt Stover, BAL	28	30	52	37	37	121
Jason Elam, DEN	27	29	51	34	34	115
Olindo Mare, MIA	26	36	52	22	22	100
Josh Scobee, JAC	26	32	48	41	41	119
Nate Kaeding, SD	26	29	54	58	58	136
Adam Vinatieri, IND	25	28	48	38	38	113
Shayne Graham, CIN	25	30	51	42	40	115
Mike Nugent, NYJ	24	27	54	35	34	106
Lawrence Tynes, KC	24	31	53	36	35	107
Rian Lindell, BUF	23	25	53	33	33	102
Rob Bironas, TEN	22	28	60	32	32	98
Phil Dawson, CLE	21	29	51	25	25	88
Stephen Gostkowski, NE	20	26	52	44	43	103
Jeff Reed, PIT	20	27	50	41	41	101
Kris Brown, HOU	19	25	49	27	26	83
Sebastian Janikowski, OAK	18	25	55	16	16	70

NFC RECEIVING LEADERS

	Rec	Yds	Avg	TDs	Long
Mike Furrey, DET	98	1,086	11.1	6	31
Torry Holt, STL	93	1,188	12.8	10	67
Donald Driver, GB	92	1,295	14.1	8	82
Steven Jackson, STL	90	806	9.0	3	64
Reggie Bush, NO	88	742	8.4	2	74
Terrell Owens, DAL	85	1,180	13.9	13	56
Anquan Boldin, ARI	83	1,203	14.5	4	64
Steve Smith, CAR	83	1,166	14.0	8	72
Roy Williams, DET	82	1,310	16.0	7	60
Brian Westbrook, PHI	77	699	9.1	4	52
Isaac Bruce, STL	74	1,098	14.8	3	45
Terry Glenn, DAL	70	1,047	15.0	6	54
Marques Colston, NO	70	1,038	14.8	8	86
Keyshawn Johnson, CAR	70	815	11.6	4	40
Larry Fitzgerald, ARI	69	946	13.7	6	57
Jeremy Shockey, NYG	66	623	9.4	7	25
Jason Witten, DAL	64	754	11.8	1	42
Darrell Jackson, SEA	63	956	15.2	10	72
Plaxico Burress, NYG	63	988	15.7	10	55
Joey Galloway, TB	62	1,057	17.0	7	64

NFC SCORING, KICKERS

	FGM	FGA	Long	XPA	XPM	Pts
Robbie Gould, CHI	32	36	49	47	47	143
Jeff Wilkins, STL	32	37	53	35	35	131
Jason Hanson, DET	29	33	53	30	30	117
Joe Nedney, SF	29	35	51	29	29	116
Neil Rackers, ARI	28	37	50	32	32	116
Dave Rayner, GB	26	35	54	32	31	109
Josh Brown, SEA	25	31	54	36	36	111
John Kasay, CAR	24	27	54	28	28	100
Jay Feely, NYG	23	27	47	38	38	107
John Carney, NO	23	25	51	47	46	115
Ryan Longwell, MIN	21	25	49	28	27	90
Morten Andersen, ATL	20	23	45	27	27	87
David Akers, PHI	18	23	47	48	48	102
Matt Bryant, TB	17	22	62	23	22	73
Mike Vanderjagt, DAL	13	18	50	33	33	72

2006 NFL INDIVIDUAL DEFENSIVE STATS

AFC INTERCEPTION LEADERS

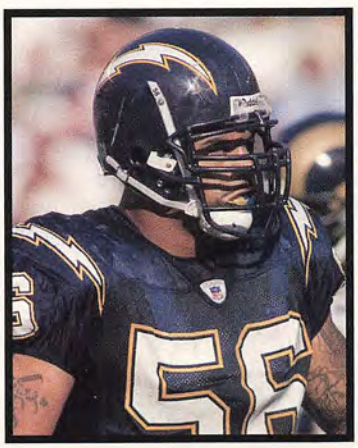
	Ints	Yds	TDs	Long
Asante Samuel, NE	10	120	0	33
Champ Bailey, DEN	10	162	1	70
Rashean Mathis, JAC	8	146	0	55
Nnamdi Asomugha, OAK	8	59	1	24
Chris McAlister, BAL	6	121	2	60
Kevin Kaesviharn, CIN	6	24	0	22
Dawan Landry, BAL	5	101	1	37
Ed Reed, BAL	5	70	1	37
Daven Holly, CLE	5	127	1	57
Sean Jones, CLE	5	46	0	19
Chris Hope, TEN	5	105	1	61

NFC INTERCEPTION LEADERS

	Ints	Yds	TDs	Long
Charles Woodson, GB	8	61	1	23
Walt Harris, SF	8	84	1	42
Lito Sheppard, PHI	6	157	1	102
Roy Williams, DAL	5	33	0	27
Ricky Manning, CHI	5	113	1	54
Charles Tillman, CHI	5	32	0	13
Brian Dawkins, PHI	4	38	0	38
Adrian Wilson, ARI	4	146	1	99
Darren Sharper, MIN	4	10	0	10
Dwight Smith, MIN	4	81	0	47
Antoine Winfield, MIN	4	33	1	26
DeAngelo Hall, ATL	4	131	1	60
Patrick Surtain, KC	4	57	0	53

AFC SACK LEADERS

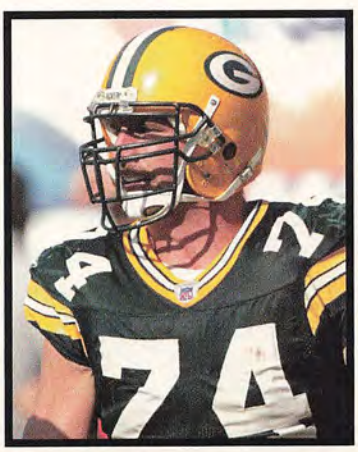
	Sacks
Shawne Merriman, SD	17
Aaron Schobel, BUF	14
Jason Taylor, MIA	13.5
Trevor Pryce, BAL	13
Shaun Phillips, SD	11.5
Adalius Thomas, BAL	11
Kamerion Wimbley, CLE	11
Derrick Burgess, OAK	11
Robert Geathers, CIN	10.5
Bobby McCray, JAC	10
Warren Sapp, OAK	10
Robert Mathis, IND	9.5
Bart Scott, BAL	9.5
Terrell Suggs, BAL	9.5
Rosevelt Colvin, NE	8.5
Bryan Thomas, NYJ	8.5
Elvis Dumervil, DEN	8.5
Tamba Hali, KC	8



Merriman: Peter Brouillet; Kampman: Larry Kinker

NFC SACK LEADERS

	Sacks
Aaron Kampman, GB	15.5
Julius Peppers, CAR	13
Leonard Little, STL	13
Mark Anderson, CHI	12
DeMarcus Ware, DAL	11.5
Will Smith, NO	10.5
Julian Peterson, SEA	10
Chike Okeafor, ARI	8.5
Trent Cole, PHI	8
Karlos Dansby, ARI	8
Cory Redding, DET	8
Corey Williams, GB	7
Alex Brown, CHI	7
Cullen Jenkins, GB	6.5
Adewale Ogunleye, CHI	6.5
Brandon Moore, SF	6.5



FANTASY FOOTBALL

QUARTERBACKS

1. **PEYTON MANNING, INDIANAPOLIS** — **Bye Week 6**
Always a legitimate threat for 30+ TDs and 4,000+ yards, but this might be the year to skip him as a first-rounder. Running backs are an even bigger priority than they've been in the past.

2. **CARSON PALMER, CINCINNATI** — **Bye Week 5**
Loses WR Chris Henry for eight games (suspension), but Palmer is not expected to lose any value since Chad Johnson and T.J. Houshmandzadeh are still prime receivers.

3. **TOM BRADY, NEW ENGLAND** — **Bye Week 10**
With the additions of WRs Randy Moss and Donte Stallworth in New England, Brady has narrowed the gap between himself and Manning and Palmer.

4. **DONOVAN MCNABB, PHILADELPHIA** — **Bye Week 5**
Loses deep threat Donte' Stallworth, but McNabb always delivers great value regardless of who's at receiver. He'll need to show that his knee is sound after suffering a torn ACL last season.

5. **DREW BREES, NEW ORLEANS** — **Bye Week 4**
Despite the loss of Joe Horn, Brees is still surrounded by a strong receiving cast. The additions of TE Eric Johnson and rookie Robert Meachem help greatly, and Reggie Bush is the most explosive receiving back in the league.

6. **MARC BULGER, ST. LOUIS** — **Bye Week 9**
As a potential 25+ TD, 4,000+ yard fantasy QB, Bulger will have an even stronger receiving corps in '07. Veterans TE Randy McMichael and WR Drew Bennett will only help the passing attack.

7. **JON KITNA, DETROIT** — **Bye Week 6**
Kitna threw for over 4,200 yards last season but managed only 21 TD passes. That problem may have been solved on draft day when the Lions took WR Calvin Johnson.

8. **ELI MANNING, N.Y. GIANTS** — **Bye Week 9**
Consistency has been Manning's main problem, but new offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride has been brought in to address that. For one, Gilbride wants more deep passes, something that was de-emphasized for Manning last season.

9. **TONY ROMO, DALLAS** — **Bye Week 8**
Romo had six multi-TD performances and topped 250 yards seven times in his 10 starts last season. It doesn't hurt to have a receiving corps of Terrell Owens, Terry Glenn and Jason Witten.

10. **MICHAEL VICK, ATLANTA** — **Bye Week 8**
New coach Bobby Petrino promises to juice up the passing attack by throwing more and giving Vick more weapons. Will it work? There is reason to expect better upside from Vick.

11. **VINCE YOUNG, TENNESSEE** — **Bye Week 4**
Young is going to derive good value from him legs, so you might not need him to throw 20+ TD passes. Young is not without risk if taken as a fantasy starter.

12. **BEN ROETHLISBERGER, PITTSBURGH** — **Bye Week 6**
Between a motorcycle accident and an appendectomy, it's no wonder Roethlisberger was down last season. Look for a more productive year from him in '07.

NEXT UP

13. **Philip Rivers, San Diego** Bye Week 7
14. **Matt Hasselbeck, Seattle** Bye Week 8
15. **Brett Favre, Green Bay** Bye Week 7
16. **J.P. Losman, Buffalo** Bye Week 6
17. **Matt Leinart, Arizona** Bye Week 8
18. **Jay Cutler, Denver** Bye Week 6
19. **Jake Delhomme, Carolina** Bye Week 7
20. **Rex Grossman, Chicago** Bye Week 9
21. **Byron Leftwich, Jacksonville** Bye Week 4
22. **Steve McNair, Baltimore** Bye Week 8
23. **Trent Green, Free Agent**
24. **Alex Smith, San Francisco** Bye Week 6
25. **Chad Pennington, N.Y. Jets** Bye Week 10
26. **Jeff Garcia, Tampa Bay** Bye Week 10
27. **Damon Huard, Kansas City** Bye Week 8
28. **Matt Schaub, Houston** Bye Week 10
29. **JaMarcus Russell, Oakland** (R) Bye Week 5
30. **Jason Campbell, Washington** Bye Week 4
31. **Tarvaris Jackson, Minnesota** Bye Week 5
32. **Brady Quinn, Cleveland** (R) Bye Week 7

RUNNING BACKS

1. **LADAINIAN TOMLINSON, SAN DIEGO**
LT could lose 10 TDs off last year's totals and still be the No. 1 RB by far. Unquestionably, the first pick in every draft. **Bye Week 7**

2. **STEVEN JACKSON, ST. LOUIS**
Moves to the No. 2 spot this season because of last year's strong performance. Jackson averaged over 30 touches per game and scored 10 TDs in the Rams' final four games of '06. **Bye Week 9**

3. **LARRY JOHNSON, KANSAS CITY**
KC's offense is built around the running game, but Johnson will be relying on a new QB this season and has lost another member from a once-stellar offensive line. **Bye Week 8**

4. **FRANK GORE, SAN FRANCISCO**
Terrific all-around play last season, but Gore needs the Niners' offense to be more productive. QB Alex Smith engineered too few scoring drives, with only eight resulting in rushing TDs inside the 10-yard-line. **Bye Week 6**

5. **BRIAN WESTBROOK, PHILADELPHIA**
Westbrook gets elevated to RB-1 status since Philly entrusted him as the workhorse back last season. The extra work netted him a career-high 1,217 rushing yards and 11 TDs. **Bye Week 5**

6. **SHAUN ALEXANDER, SEATTLE**
A foot injury cost him six games last year, but even when healthy he did not run like the Alexander of old. Is he slowing down? Was it problems in the O-line? There are concerns this season. **Bye Week 8**

7. **WILLIE PARKER, PITTSBURGH**
Pittsburgh's decision to give Parker more rushing opportunities (337) and more goal-line chances (13 TDs) were behind his impressive fantasy totals last year. He'll have a new coach, but not much is expected to change. **Bye Week 6**

8. **JOSEPH ADDAI, INDIANAPOLIS**
Addai has the potential to be an elite fantasy back if Tony Dungy uses him more. Dungy's on record as saying he does not want Addai to be a "20-25 carry back." We'll see. Coaches also find it tough not to go with what works. **Bye Week 6**

9. **RUDI JOHNSON, CINCINNATI**
You can't argue with Johnson's consistency. He has scored 12 TDs and topped 1,300 yards in each

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of the last three seasons. Any concerns? He has lost two starters from last season's O-line. **Bye Week 5**

10. LAURENCE MARONEY, NEW ENGLAND

Maroney has great upside now that Corey Dillon is gone. He'll likely see upwards of 20 rushes per game and can capitalize with his breakaway speed. He'll inherit Dillon's goal-line role, which generated 25 TDs the last two seasons. **Bye Week 10**

11. EDGERRIN JAMES, ARIZONA

If new coach Ken Whisenhunt can rebuild the Cards' O-line, look for an upswing in James' numbers. Having been in Pittsburgh's system for several seasons, Whisenhunt knows the value of a power rushing attack. **Bye Week 8**

12. REGGIE BUSH, NEW ORLEANS

Bush is unlikely to infringe much more on Deuce McAllister's rushing workload, but he augments his value as a receiver. Bush's 88 catches last season were second among all running backs. **Bye Week 4**

13. WILLIS MCGAHEE, BALTIMORE

McGahee's problems in Buffalo were a low number of scoring opportunities. That should improve in Baltimore, however. Behind QB Steve McNair, the Ravens have a more potent offense. **Bye Week 8**

14. TRAVIS HENRY, DENVER

Henry is a good fit for what Denver has been looking for — a power back capable of handling a high workload and one who is well-versed running in a zone blocking scheme. This should translate into solid fantasy numbers this year. **Bye Week 6**

15. THOMAS JONES, N.Y. JETS

Jones has better upside than what we've seen from him in the past. In New York, he'll be the primary RB; will run behind one of the league's better offensive lines; and will likely see the majority of the goal-line action. **Bye Week 10**

16. CEDRIC BENSON, CHICAGO

Following the trade of Thomas Jones (Jets), Benson's fantasy stock is poised to gain substantially this season. Chicago envisions him as a high-workload runner who will see just about every opportunity when the Bears are near the goal line. **Bye Week 9**

17. CLINTON PORTIS, WASHINGTON

Watch it here! Portis is coming off an injury-plagued season, and that has Joe Gibbs leaning towards a two-back scheme in '07. Backup Ladell Betts proved last year that he was no slouch, and Portis may be yielding more to him. **Bye Week 4**

18. MAURICE JONES-DREW, JACKSONVILLE

Jones-Drew might not see a repeat of last year's 16 total TDs, but he'll still be a valuable fantasy back. He did his damage last year on only 212 touches — or one score every 15th touch. And with TDs of 32, 48, 51 and 74 yards, he gains even more value in distance leagues. **Bye Week 4**

19. DEUCE MCALLISTER, NEW ORLEANS

Even with Reggie Bush here, McAllister was a highly productive fantasy back last year. With a TD and/or 100+ yards in 10 of 15 games, McAllister's consistency was excellent. He scored nine of the Saints' goal-line TDs in '06 and will be used in this role again in '07. **Bye Week 4**

20. RONNIE BROWN, MIAMI

Brown was certainly impacted by poor play at QB and an inconsistent offensive line last season (and a wrist injury that cost him three games) and needs improvement in these two areas to be fantasy-effective. New coach Cam Cameron is working on it. **Bye Week 9**

21. ADRIAN PETERSON, MINNESOTA (R)

For as much promise Peterson has he's in a tenuous fantasy situation if forced to split the action with Chester Taylor. It's possible Peterson can wrestle the job away at some point, but that's what you'll be counting on if you draft him early. **Bye Week 5**

22. AHMAN GREEN, HOUSTON

Green is slated to be the Texans' new featured back this season, but there are concerns. He'll need better play from a very inconsistent Houston O-line, and new QB Matt Schaub will have to be effective enough to keep defenses from stacking the line against Green. **Bye Week 10**

23. FRED TAYLOR, JACKSONVILLE

Like last season, look for Taylor to yield considerable action to Maurice Jones-Drew. Despite his small size, Jones-Drew also stole away a number of goal-line opportunities, eroding Taylor's fantasy value. **Bye Week 4**

24. BRANDON JACOBS, N.Y. GIANTS

Although Reuben Droughns is here now too, look for Jacobs to have first crack at the starting RB job. He has been a terrific goal-line runner (16 TDs in the last two years) but now has to convince fantasy owners he can be an every-down back. **Bye Week 9**

NEXT UP

25.	Marshawn Lynch, Buffalo (R)	Bye Week 6
26.	Jamal Lewis, Cleveland	Bye Week 7
27.	Vernand Morency, Green Bay	Bye Week 7
28.	Marion Barber, Dallas	Bye Week 8
29.	Chester Taylor, Minnesota	Bye Week 5
30.	Julius Jones, Dallas	Bye Week 8
31.	Cadillac Williams, Tampa Bay	Bye Week 10
32.	DeShaun Foster, Carolina	Bye Week 7
33.	Warrick Dunn, Atlanta	Bye Week 8
34.	Ladell Betts, Washington	Bye Week 4
35.	LaMont Jordan, Oakland	Bye Week 5
36.	Jerious Norwood, Atlanta	Bye Week 8
37.	Tatum Bell, Detroit	Bye Week 6
38.	Kevin Jones, Detroit	Bye Week 6
39.	DeAngelo Williams, Carolina	Bye Week 7
40.	LenDale White, Tennessee	Bye Week 4
41.	Mike Bell, Denver	Bye Week 6
42.	Anthony Thomas, Buffalo	Bye Week 6
43.	Reuben Droughns, N.Y. Giants	Bye Week 9
44.	Michael Pittman, Tampa Bay	Bye Week 10
45.	Brandon Jackson, Green Bay (R)	Bye Week 7
46.	Michael Turner, San Diego	Bye Week 7
47.	Dominic Rhodes, Oakland	Bye Week 5
48.	Chris Henry, Tennessee (R)	Bye Week 4
49.	Chris Brown, Tennessee	Bye Week 4
50.	Leon Washington, N.Y. Jets	Bye Week 10

WIDE RECEIVERS

1. STEVE SMITH, CAROLINA

Injuries to both himself and QB Jake Delhomme had an impact on Smith's '06 season, causing him to finish below expectations. However, with a healthy season ahead for both, Smith should approach his '05 stats of 12 TDs and 1,500 yards. **Bye Week 7**

2. TERRELL OWENS, DALLAS

No big changes are expected in Dallas' passing game, even though the Cowboys have a new coach. Owens' value, however, hinges on Tony Romo's development, but TO still belongs among the top three fantasy WRs on draft day. **Bye Week 8**

3. MARVIN HARRISON, INDIANAPOLIS

Consistency continues to be the name of the game for Harrison. He had only three games in '06 in which he failed to either score or get at least 50 yards. As long as Peyton Manning is at QB, Harrison will be an elite fantasy WR. **Bye Week 6**

4. CHAD JOHNSON, CINCINNATI

His seven TDs in '06 were a disappointment to fantasy owners, but there are reasons to expect better numbers from Johnson this year. With the eight-game suspension of WR Chris Henry (nine TDs last season), Carson Palmer will be looking for CJ more. **Bye Week 5**

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WIDE RECEIVERS

5. TORRY HOLT, ST. LOUIS

Holt's fantasy value took a little hit under head coach Scott Linehan's more conservative passing game, but there's no reason to worry. The Rams' passing attack is still expected to generate 24+ TDs and upwards of 4,000 yards, and Holt will get a good chunk of that. **Bye Week 9**

6. LEE EVANS, BUFFALO

Evans showed last year that he can be a highly productive fantasy receiver and could have even greater upside if QB J.P. Losman plays like he did in the latter half of last season (12 TDs in the final seven games). Don't expect Evans to last long on draft day. **Bye Week 6**

7. ROY WILLIAMS, DETROIT

Williams' fantasy value spiked on draft day when the Lions selected Calvin Johnson. Defenses won't have the luxury of double-teaming Williams on every play. Look for more than the seven TDs he delivered last season. **Bye Week 6**

8. REGGIE WAYNE, INDIANAPOLIS

Wayne's nine TDs and 1,300+ yards in '06 were an improvement over his '05 numbers (five TDs, 1,055 yds), and Peyton Manning targeted him 137 times, only 11 fewer than Marvin Harrison. Expect an 8-10 TD performance this season. **Bye Week 6**

9. ANQUAN BOLDIN, ARIZONA

While Boldin's 1,200 yards from last season met fantasy expectations — his four TDs did not. The inexperience of QB Matt Leinart was the reason behind this. Boldin's value is directly tied to Leinart's progress, which should be on a faster track this year. **Bye Week 8**

10. LARRY FITZGERALD, ARIZONA

Fitzgerald was hurt by the inexperience of QB Matt Leinart, who only threw 11 TD passes in his 13 starts. We wouldn't be too swayed by last year's stats (six TDs, 946 yards) but it's tough for him to amass huge TD numbers with Boldin here too. **Bye Week 8**

11. T.J. HOUSHMANDZADEH, CINCINNATI

You would think Houshmandzadeh's fantasy value would suffer a little with Chad Johnson on the other side, but that's not the case. In '06 he was among the top 10 receivers, and his 90 catches give him great value in a points-per-reception league. **Bye Week 5**

12. DONALD DRIVER, GREEN BAY

Driver gives you big-play ability (100+ yards in 12 of his last 48 games) and excellent consistency as reason to grab him as a top-flight fantasy starter. Driver scored and/or had at least 90 yards in 11 games last year. **Bye Week 7**

13. RANDY MOSS, NEW ENGLAND

There's a lot of excitement about seeing Moss team up with a QB like Tom Brady, but New England's passing is known for spreading it around. Even Deion Branch never had more than five TD catches or 1,000 yards when he was here. Don't go overboard. Moss is a borderline WR-1. **Bye Week 10**

14. MARQUES COLSTON, NEW ORLEANS

Even though he missed all or parts of four games last year, Colston finished a sensational rookie season with eight TDs and 1,000+ yards. Now with the loss of Joe Horn (Atlanta), Colston moves into the No. 1 WR role. Is he ready? He'll see more double-teaming now. **Bye Week 4**

15. PLAXICO BURRESS, N.Y. GIANTS

Burress stands to benefit this year for two reasons. New offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride wants more from the passing game, and the Giants have to replace the 50+ receptions Tiki Barber took with him into retirement. Burress might be undervalued on draft day. **Bye Week 9**

16. REGGIE BROWN, PHILADELPHIA

Brown is projected to move into the No. 1 WR spot now that Donte' Stallworth has moved on. But a healthy Donovan McNabb is critical to Brown's success. Brown's no secret anymore, but keep tabs on McNabb's recovery. **Bye Week 5**

17. JAVON WALKER, DENVER

Walker's fantasy value this season will depend a lot on second-year QB Jay Cutler. He'll still retain the go-to receiver role, but last year Cutler was inclined to look more to the other receivers, especially TE Tony Scheffler. **Bye Week 6**

18. HINES WARD, PITTSBURGH

Ward's fantasy value will likely be down on draft day due to his six TDs last season. The low production was partly due to missing two games with injuries, but he was also limited in at least five others. Ward's another one whose stock might not reflect his upside this year. **Bye Week 6**

19. VINCENT JACKSON, SAN DIEGO

The Chargers have acknowledged that Jackson is their No. 1 guy for '07. His size (6'5") gives him a great advantage over defenders, and his deceptive speed is reason to expect big plays from him too. **Bye Week 7**

20. DEION BRANCH, SEATTLE

The trade of Darrell Jackson (San Francisco) opens the door for Branch to gain significant fantasy value. Although there's a chance he could produce like a No. 1 receiver, Branch makes for a very solid No. 2 fantasy wideout. **Bye Week 8**

21. CALVIN JOHNSON, DETROIT (R)

Johnson is expected to start opposite Roy Williams and have an immediate impact. At 6'4", he'll help immensely in the red zone, where the Lions struggled last season. Rookie receivers are generally fantasy risks, but take that chance with Johnson. **Bye Week 6**

22. DARRELL JACKSON, SAN FRANCISCO

The big difference between the Darrell Jackson in Seattle and the one now with the Niners will be the QB throwing him the ball. Working with a developing Alex Smith versus a seasoned veteran like Matt Hasselbeck will result in Jackson's fall to a No. 2 starting fantasy receiver status. **Bye Week 6**

23. ANDRE JOHNSON, HOUSTON

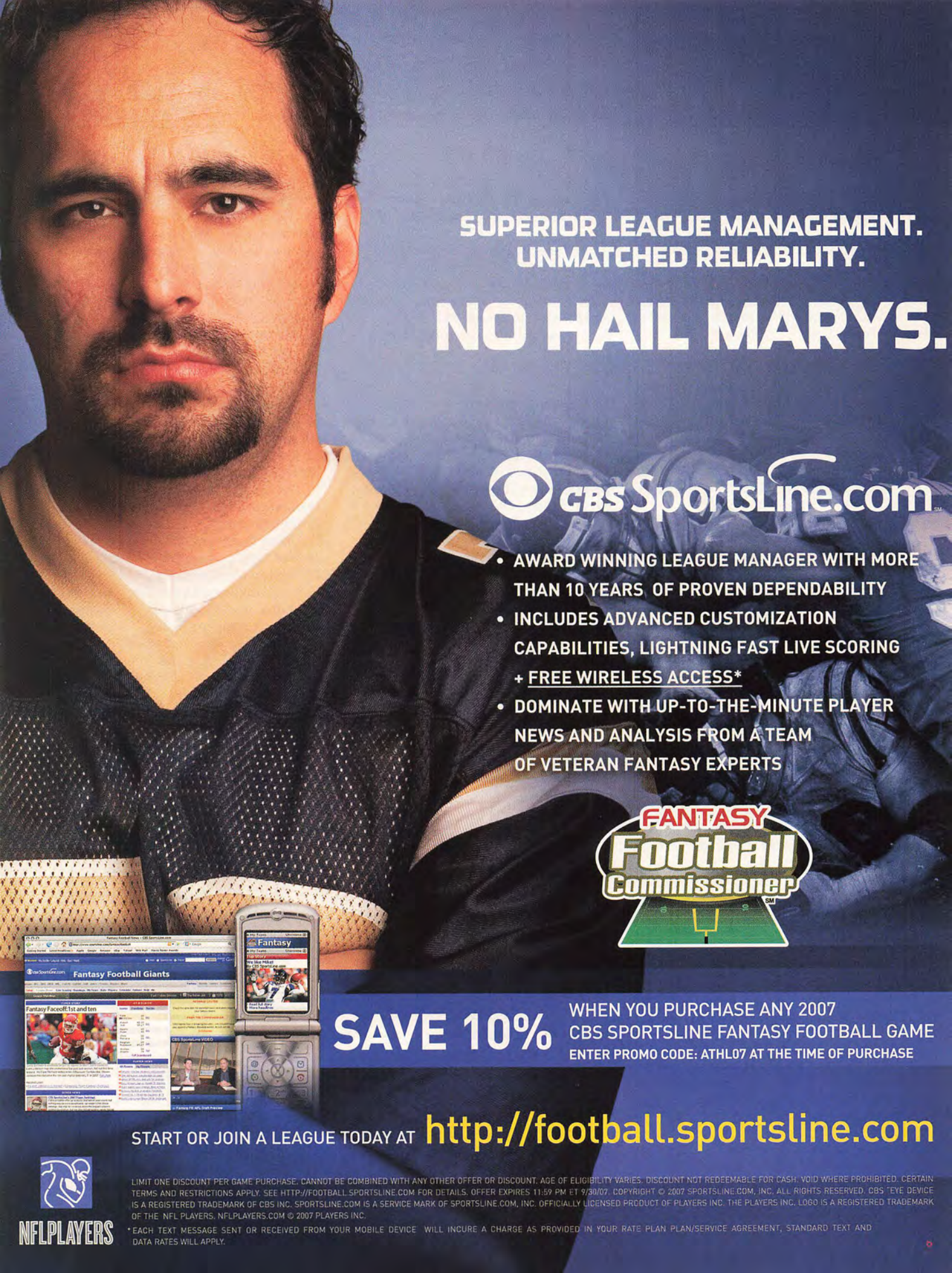
Johnson led the league in catches (103) last season but scored only five TDs. He'll no doubt continue as Houston's go-to receiver, but his risk is heightened with an unproven Matt Schaub at QB. Last year's stats may have Johnson overvalued this year. **Bye Week 10**

24. LAVERANUES COLES, N.Y. JETS

His 91 receptions and five 100+ yard receiving games helped many fantasy owners in '06, and Coles projects for a repeat. Other than fellow WR Jerricho Cotchery, he doesn't have much competition in the passing game. **Bye Week 10**

NEXT UP

25. Chris Chambers, Miami	Bye Week 9
26. Donte' Stallworth, N.E.	Bye Week 10
27. Joey Galloway, Tampa Bay	Bye Week 10
28. Santana Moss, Washington	Bye Week 4
29. Terry Glenn, Dallas	Bye Week 8
30. Mark Clayton, Baltimore	Bye Week 8
31. Bernard Berrian, Chicago	Bye Week 9
32. Braylon Edwards, Cleveland	Bye Week 7
33. Greg Jennings, Green Bay	Bye Week 7
34. Jerricho Cotchery, N.Y. Jets	Bye Week 10
35. Santonio Holmes, Pittsburgh	Bye Week 6
36. Isaac Bruce, St. Louis	Bye Week 9
37. Joe Horn, Atlanta	Bye Week 8
38. Muhsin Muhammad, Chicago	Bye Week 9
39. Eddie Kennison, Kansas City	Bye Week 8
40. Ronald Curry, Oakland	Bye Week 5
41. Kevin Curtis, Philadelphia	Bye Week 5
42. Derrick Mason, Baltimore	Bye Week 8
43. Matt Jones, Jacksonville	Bye Week 4
44. Devery Henderson, N.O.	Bye Week 4
45. Jerry Porter, Oakland	Bye Week 5
46. D.J. Hackett, Seattle	Bye Week 8
47. Brandon Jones, Tennessee	Bye Week 4
48. Michael Jenkins, Atlanta	Bye Week 8
49. Brandon Marshall, Denver	Bye Week 6
50. Reggie Williams, Jacksonville	Bye Week 4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TIGHT ENDS

1. ANTONIO GATES, SAN DIEGO

Even with the coaching change here there's no reason to suspect that Gates will fail to deliver top-level fantasy stats once again. **Bye Week 7**

2. JEREMY SHOCKEY, N.Y. GIANTS

New offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride is expected to revitalize the passing game, and this will benefit Shockey. **Bye Week 9**

3. TONY GONZALEZ, KANSAS CITY

Despite the lack of scoring, Gonzalez' consistent yardage totals continue to make make him a top pick. **Bye Week 8**

4. KELLEN WINSLOW, CLEVELAND

With only three TDs last season he remains a fantasy concern. But, if the offense improves, Winslow should benefit. **Bye Week 7**

5. CHRIS COOLEY, WASHINGTON

Even after three straight years with at least six TDs, we don't expect a cool down for Cooley in 2007. **Bye Week 4**

6. ALGE CRUMPLER, ATLANTA

New head coach Bobby Petrino's system will be designed to get Atlanta's WRs more involved, but we wouldn't bet on Crumpler losing any fantasy value this year. **Bye Week 8**

7. TODD HEAP, BALTIMORE

Not likely to be taken among the top two or three fantasy tight ends, but Heap will be in that next group. He's not a big yardage guy, but he will find the end zone. **Bye Week 8**

8. JASON WITTEN, DALLAS

Terrell Owens' seven red zone TDs hurt Witten in '06 and may affect his fantasy draft position this year. He's usually good for 60+ receptions and with a few more TDs this year will be a value pick. **Bye Week 8**

9. VERNON DAVIS, SAN FRANCISCO

A broken leg derailed Davis' rookie season last year so he was unable to maximize his potential. You win in fantasy football by taking chances, and Davis is one to take a chance with. **Bye Week 6**

10. BEN WATSON, NEW ENGLAND

In a Patriots' offense that routinely involves as many as eight players in the passing game, it's difficult for Watson to catch more than 60 passes. But we still think he's starting material. **Bye Week 10**

11. L.J. SMITH, PHILADELPHIA

The injury to QB Donovan McNabb definitely hurt Smith's numbers in '06. He could be a good mid-level fantasy TE (even undervalued by some) if McNabb stays healthy. **Bye Week 5**

12. DALLAS CLARK, INDIANAPOLIS

While there's always opportunity in a Peyton Manning-led offense, it's tough for Clark to dominate here with WRs Harrison and Wayne doing most of the damage. He's risky as a starter, but undervalued as a reserve. **Bye Week 6**

NEXT UP

13. Tony Scheffler, Denver	Bye Week 6
14. Randy McMichael, St. Louis	Bye Week 9
15. Eric Johnson, New Orleans	Bye Week 4
16. Heath Miller, Pittsburgh	Bye Week 6
17. Owen Daniels, Houston	Bye Week 10
18. Ben Troupe, Tennessee	Bye Week 4
19. Greg Olsen, Chicago (R)	Bye Week 9
20. Alex Smith, Tampa Bay	Bye Week 10
21. Desmond Clark, Chicago	Bye Week 9
22. Bo Scaife, Tennessee	Bye Week 4
23. Chris Baker, N.Y. Jets	Bye Week 10
24. David Martin, Miami	Bye Week 9
25. Bubba Franks, Green Bay	Bye Week 7
26. Robert Royal, Buffalo	Bye Week 6
27. Ben Utecht, Indianapolis	Bye Week 6
28. George Wrighster, Jacksonville	Bye Week 4
29. Marcus Pollard, Seattle	Bye Week 8
30. Daniel Graham, Denver	Bye Week 6
31. Visanthe Shiancoe, Minnesota	Bye Week 5
32. Steve Heiden, Cleveland	Bye Week 7

KICKERS

1. Shayne Graham, Cincinnati	Bye Week 5
2. Neil Rackers, Arizona	Bye Week 8
3. Nate Kaeding, San Diego	Bye Week 7
4. Adam Vinatieri, Indianapolis	Bye Week 6
5. Robbie Gould, Chicago	Bye Week 9
6. Jeff Wilkins, St. Louis	Bye Week 9
7. Jason Elam, Denver	Bye Week 6
8. Matt Stover, Baltimore	Bye Week 8
9. Joe Nedney, San Francisco	Bye Week 6
10. Josh Brown, Seattle	Bye Week 8
11. Josh Scobee, Jacksonville	Bye Week 4
12. Jay Feely, Miami	Bye Week 9
13. David Akers, Philadelphia	Bye Week 5
14. Jeff Reed, Pittsburgh	Bye Week 6
15. Jason Hanson, Detroit	Bye Week 6
16. Rob Bironas, Tennessee	Bye Week 4
17. John Kasay, Carolina	Bye Week 7
18. Rian Lindell, Buffalo	Bye Week 6
19. Ryan Longwell, Minnesota	Bye Week 5
20. Mike Nugent, N.Y. Jets	Bye Week 10
21. Olindo Mare, New Orleans	Bye Week 4
22. Matt Bryant, Tampa Bay	Bye Week 10
23. Stephen Gostkowski, N.E.	Bye Week 10
24. Lawrence Tynes, Kansas City	Bye Week 8
25. Martin Gramatica, Dallas	Bye Week 8
26. Mason Crosby, Green Bay	Bye Week 7
27. Sebastian Janikowski, Oakland	Bye Week 5
28. Phil Dawson, Cleveland	Bye Week 7
29. Shaun Suisham, Washington	Bye Week 4
30. Kris Brown, Houston	Bye Week 10
31. Josh Huston, N.Y. Giants	Bye Week 9
32. Aaron Elling, Atlanta	Bye Week 8

DEFENSES

1. CHICAGO BEARS	Bye Week 9
2. BALTIMORE RAVENS	Bye Week 8
3. SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	Bye Week 7
4. NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS	Bye Week 10
5. PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	Bye Week 5
6. MINNESOTA VIKINGS	Bye Week 5
7. JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS	Bye Week 4
8. MIAMI DOLPHINS	Bye Week 9
9. PITTSBURGH STEELERS	Bye Week 6
10. DALLAS COWBOYS	Bye Week 8
11. CAROLINA PANTHERS	Bye Week 7
12. NEW YORK JETS	Bye Week 10
13. DENVER BRONCOS	Bye Week 6
14. TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	Bye Week 10
15. SEATTLE SEAHAWKS	Bye Week 8
16. GREEN BAY PACKERS	Bye Week 7
17. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	Bye Week 4
18. ARIZONA CARDINALS	Bye Week 8
19. CLEVELAND BROWNS	Bye Week 7
20. BUFFALO BILLS	Bye Week 6
21. SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS	Bye Week 6
22. NEW YORK GIANTS	Bye Week 9
23. HOUSTON TEXANS	Bye Week 10
24. OAKLAND RAIDERS	Bye Week 5
25. INDIANAPOLIS COLTS	Bye Week 6
26. TENNESSEE TITANS	Bye Week 4
27. ATLANTA FALCONS	Bye Week 8
28. KANSAS CITY CHIEFS	Bye Week 8
29. ST. LOUIS RAMS	Bye Week 9
30. CINCINNATI BENGALS	Bye Week 5
31. WASHINGTON REDSKINS	Bye Week 4
32. DETROIT LIONS	Bye Week 6

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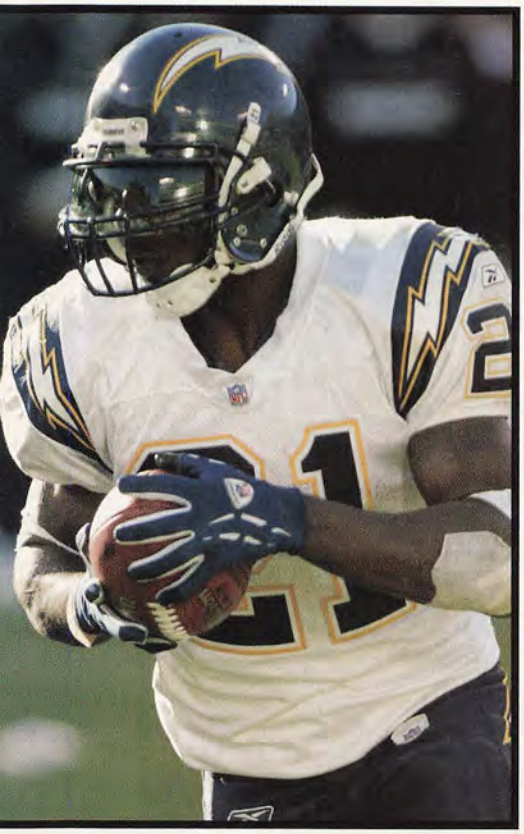
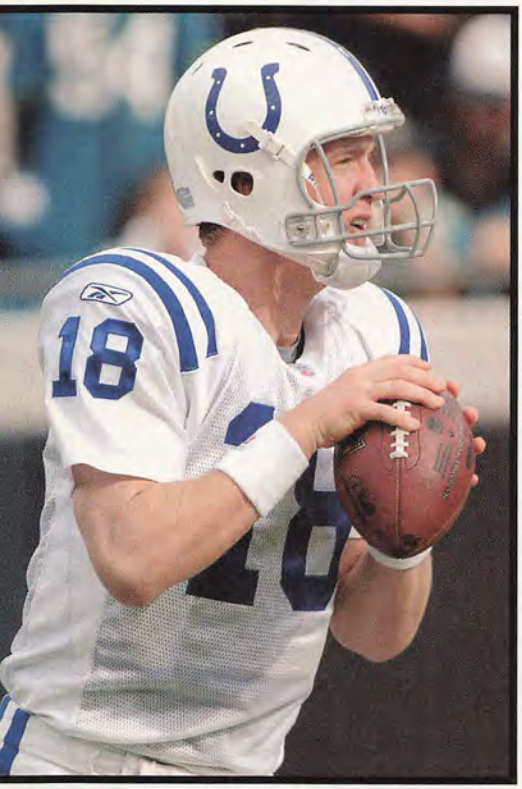


TOP 50 FANTASY PLAYERS

	Player	Pos.	Bye		Player	Pos.	Bye
1.	LaDainian Tomlinson/San Diego	RB	7	26.	Deuce McAllister/New Orleans	RB	4
2.	Steven Jackson/St. Louis	RB	9	27.	Ronnie Brown/Miami	RB	9
3.	Larry Johnson/Kansas City	RB	8	28.	Roy Williams/Detroit	WR	6
4.	Frank Gore/San Francisco	RB	6	29.	Reggie Wayne/Indianapolis	WR	6
5.	Brian Westbrook/Philadelphia	RB	5	30.	Carson Palmer/Cincinnati	QB	5
6.	Shaun Alexander/Seattle	RB	8	31.	Anquan Boldin/Arizona	WR	8
7.	Willie Parker/Pittsburgh	RB	6	32.	Larry Fitzgerald/Arizona	WR	8
8.	Joseph Addai/Indianapolis	RB	6	33.	T.J. Houshmandzadeh/Cincinnati	WR	5
9.	Rudi Johnson/Cincinnati	RB	5	34.	Donald Driver/Green Bay	WR	7
10.	Laurence Maroney/New England	RB	10	35.	Randy Moss/New England	WR	10
11.	Edgerrin James/Arizona	RB	8	36.	Adrian Peterson/Minnesota (R)	RB	5
12.	Steve Smith/Carolina	WR	7	37.	Tom Brady/New England	QB	10
13.	Terrell Owens/Dallas	WR	8	38.	Ahman Green/Houston	RB	10
14.	Marvin Harrison/Indianapolis	WR	6	39.	Marques Colston/New Orleans	WR	4
15.	Reggie Bush/New Orleans	RB	4	40.	Plaxico Burress/N.Y. Giants	WR	9
16.	Peyton Manning/Indianapolis	QB	6	41.	Reggie Brown/Philadelphia	WR	5
17.	Chad Johnson/Cincinnati	WR	5	42.	Javon Walker/Denver	WR	6
18.	Willis McGahee/Baltimore	RB	8	43.	Fred Taylor/Jacksonville	RB	4
19.	Travis Henry/Denver	RB	6	44.	Donovan McNabb/Philadelphia	QB	5
20.	Thomas Jones/N.Y. Jets	RB	10	45.	Drew Brees/New Orleans	QB	4
21.	Cedric Benson/Chicago	RB	9	46.	Marc Bulger/St. Louis	QB	9
22.	Clinton Portis/Washington	RB	4	47.	Brandon Jacobs/N.Y. Giants	RB	9
23.	Torry Holt/St. Louis	WR	9	48.	Hines Ward/Pittsburgh	WR	6
24.	Maurice Jones-Drew/Jacksonville	RB	4	49.	Vincent Jackson/San Diego	WR	7
25.	Lee Evans/Buffalo	WR	6	50.	Marshawn Lynch/Buffalo (R)	RB	6



FANTASY STATS

QUARTERBACKS

	Player	Games Played	Games Started	Comp %	Pass Yds.	300+ yds	Rush Yds.	Pass TDs	Rush TDs	Total TDs	INT's
1.	P. Manning/IND	16	16	65.0%	4,397	6	36	31	4	35	9
2.	C. Palmer/CIN	16	16	62.3%	4,035	2	37	28	0	28	13
3.	T. Brady/NE	16	16	61.8%	3,529	3	102	24	0	24	12
4.	D. McNabb/PHI	10	10	57.0%	2,647	4	212	18	3	21	6
5.	D. Brees/NO	16	16	64.3%	4,418	8	32	26	0	26	11
6.	M. Bulger/STL	16	16	62.9%	4,301	8	44	24	0	24	8
7.	J. Kitna/DET	16	16	62.4%	4,208	4	156	21	2	23	22
8.	E. Manning/NYG	16	16	57.7%	3,244	1	21	24	0	24	18
9.	T. Romo/DAL	16	10	65.3%	2,903	3	102	19	0	19	13
10.	M. Vick/ATL	16	16	52.6%	2,474	0	1,039	20	2	22	13
11.	V. Young/TEN	15	13	51.5%	2,199	0	552	12	7	19	13
12.	B. Roethlisberger/PIT	15	15	59.7%	3,513	2	98	18	2	20	23
13.	P. Rivers/SD	16	16	61.7%	3,388	2	49	22	0	22	9
14.	M. Hasselbeck/SEA	12	12	56.6%	2,442	0	110	18	0	18	15
15.	B. Favre/GB	16	16	56.0%	3,885	3	29	18	1	19	18
16.	J. Losman/BUF	16	16	62.5%	3,051	2	140	19	1	20	14
17.	M. Leinart/ARZ	12	11	56.8%	2,547	1	49	11	2	13	12
18.	J. Cutler/DEN	5	5	59.1%	1,001	0	18	9	0	9	5
19.	J. Delhomme/CAR	13	13	61.0%	2,813	1	12	17	0	17	11
20.	R. Grossman/CHI	16	16	54.6%	3,193	1	2	23	0	23	20
21.	B. Leftwich/JAX	6	6	59.0%	1,159	0	41	7	2	9	5
22.	S. McNair/BAL	16	16	63.0%	3,050	1	119	16	1	17	12
23.	T. Green/FA	8	8	61.1%	1,342	0	59	7	0	7	9
24.	A. Smith/SF	16	16	58.1%	2,890	0	147	16	2	18	16
25.	C. Pennington/NYJ	16	16	64.5%	3,352	3	109	17	0	17	16

Tomlinson: Brad Schloss; Manning: Mark Langello

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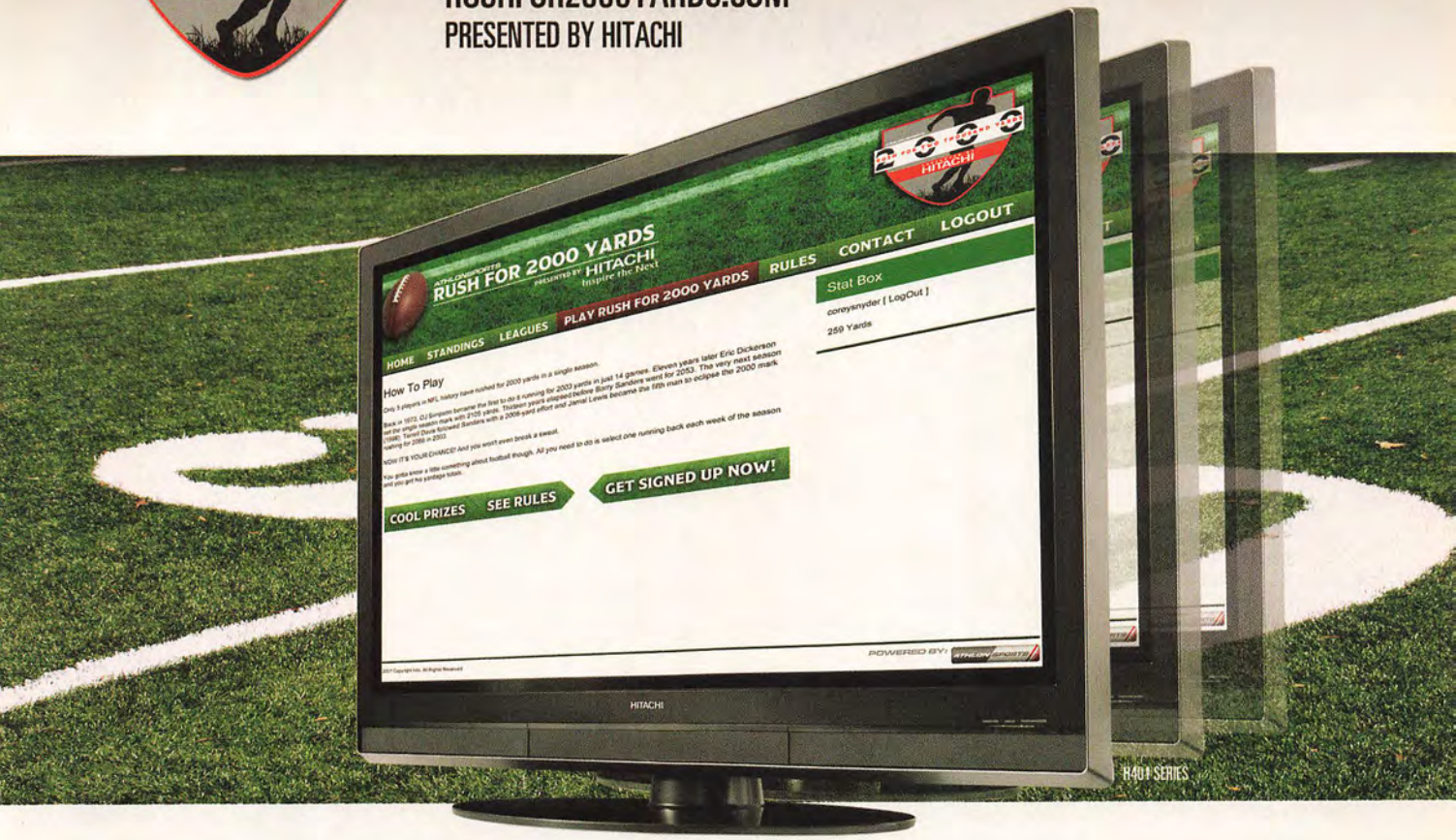

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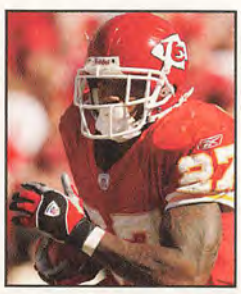
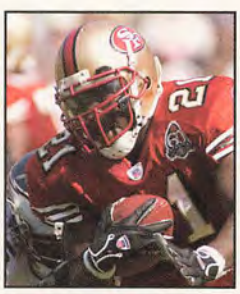
FANTASY STATS

RUNNING BACKS

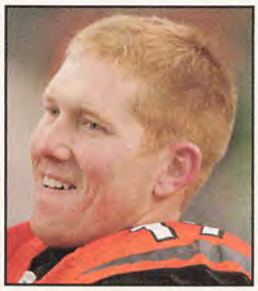
	Player	Games Played	Rush TD's	No. Att.	Rush Yds.	Yds/ Rush	Rec TDs	No. Rec	Rec Yds.	Total TDs	Total Yds.
1.	L. Tomlinson/SD	16	28	348	1,815	5.2	3	56	508	33	2323
2.	S. Jackson/STL	16	13	346	1,528	4.4	3	90	806	16	2334
3.	L. Johnson/KC	16	17	416	1,789	4.3	2	41	410	19	2199
4.	F. Gore/SF	16	8	312	1,695	5.4	1	61	485	9	2180
5.	B. Westbrook/PHI	15	7	240	1,217	5.1	4	77	699	11	1916
6.	S. Alexander/SEA	10	7	252	896	3.6	0	12	48	7	944
7.	W. Parker/PIT	16	13	337	1,494	4.4	3	31	222	16	1716
8.	J. Addai/IND	16	7	226	1,081	4.8	1	40	325	8	1406
9.	R. Johnson/CIN	16	12	341	1,309	3.8	0	23	124	12	1433
10.	L. Maroney/NE	14	6	175	745	4.3	1	22	194	7	939
11.	E. James/ARZ	16	6	337	1,159	3.4	0	38	217	6	1376
12.	R. Bush/NO	16	6	155	565	3.6	2	88	742	9	1307
13.	W. McGahee/BUF	14	6	259	990	3.8	0	18	156	6	1146
14.	T. Henry/DEN	14	7	270	1,211	4.5	0	18	78	7	1289
15.	T. Jones/NYJ	16	6	296	1,210	4.1	0	36	154	6	1364
16.	C. Benson/CHI	15	6	157	647	4.1	0	8	54	6	701
17.	C. Portis/WAS	8	7	127	523	4.1	0	17	170	7	693
18.	M. Jones-Drew/JAX	16	13	166	941	5.7	2	46	436	16	1377
19.	D. McAllister/NO	15	11	244	1,057	4.3	0	30	198	11	1255
20.	R. Brown/MIA	13	5	241	1,008	4.2	0	33	276	5	1284
21.	A. Peterson/MIN (ROOKIE)										
22.	A. Green/HOU	14	5	266	1,059	4.0	1	46	373	6	1432
23.	F. Taylor/JAX	15	5	231	1,146	5.0	1	23	242	6	1388
24.	B. Jacobs/NYG	15	9	96	423	4.4	0	11	149	9	572
25.	M. Lynch/BUF (ROOKIE)										
26.	J. Lewis/CLE	16	9	314	1,132	3.6	0	18	115	9	1247
27.	V. Morency/GB	14	2	96	434	4.5	0	17	118	2	552
28.	M. Barber/DAL	16	14	135	654	4.8	2	23	196	16	850
29.	C. Taylor/MIN	15	6	303	1,214	4.0	0	42	288	6	1502
30.	J. Jones/DAL	16	4	267	1,084	4.1	0	9	142	4	1226
31.	C. Williams/TB	14	1	225	798	3.5	0	30	196	1	994
32.	D. Foster/CAR	14	3	227	897	4.0	0	32	159	3	1056
33.	W. Dunn/ATL	16	4	286	1,140	4.0	1	22	170	5	1310
34.	L. Betts/Was	16	4	245	1,154	4.7	1	53	445	5	1599
35.	L. Jordan/OAK	9	2	114	434	3.8	0	10	74	2	508
36.	J. Norwood/ATL	14	2	99	633	6.4	0	12	102	2	735
37.	T. Bell/DET	13	2	233	1,025	4.4	0	24	115	2	1140
38.	K. Jones/DET	12	6	181	689	3.8	2	61	520	8	1209
39.	D. Williams/CAR	13	1	121	501	4.1	1	33	313	2	814
40.	L. White/TEN	13	0	61	244	4.0	0	14	60	0	304
41.	M. Bell/DEN	15	8	157	677	4.3	0	20	158	8	835
42.	A. Thomas/BUF	16	2	107	378	3.5	0	22	139	2	517
43.	R. Droughns/NYG	14	4	220	758	3.4	0	27	169	4	927
44.	M. Pittman/TB	16	1	50	245	4.9	0	47	405	1	650
45.	B. Jackson/GB (ROOKIE)										
46.	M. Turner/SD	13	2	80	502	6.3	0	3	47	2	549
47.	D. Rhodes/OAK	16	5	187	641	3.4	0	36	251	5	892
48.	C. Henry/TEN (ROOKIE)										
49.	C. Brown/FA	5	0	41	156	3.8	0	2	4	0	160
50.	L. Washington/NYJ	16	4	151	650	4.3	0	25	270	4	920

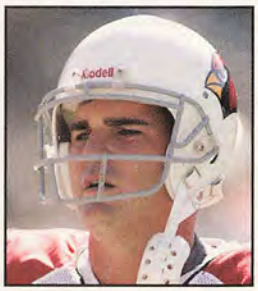


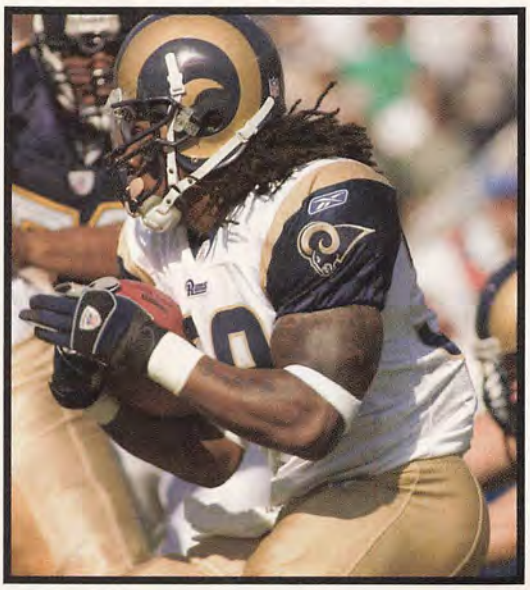


KICKERS

	Player	Games Played	PATs	FGs	FG %	Total Pts.
1.	S. Graham/CIN	16	40/42	25/30	83.30%	115
2.	N. Rackers/ARZ	16	32/32	28/37	75.70%	116
3.	N. Kaeding/SD	16	58/58	26/29	89.70%	136
4.	A. Vinatieri/IND	16	38/38	25/28	89.30%	113
5.	R. Gould/CHI	16	47/47	32/36	88.90%	143
6.	J. Wilkins/STL	16	35/35	32/37	86.50%	131
7.	J. Elam/DEN	16	34/34	27/29	93.10%	115
8.	M. Stover/BAL	16	37/37	28/30	93.30%	121
9.	J. Nedney/SF	16	29/29	29/35	82.90%	116
10.	J. Brown/SEA	16	36/36	25/31	80.60%	111
11.	J. Scobee/JAX	16	41/41	26/32	81.30%	119
12.	J. Feely/NYG	16	38/38	23/27	85.20%	107
13.	D. Akers/PHI	16	48/48	18/23	78.30%	102
14.	J. Reed/PIT	16	41/41	20/27	74.10%	101
15.	J. Hanson/DET	16	30/30	29/33	87.90%	117
16.	R. Bironas/TEN	16	32/32	22/28	78.60%	98
17.	J. Kasay/CAR	16	28/28	24/27	88.90%	100
18.	R. Lindell/BUF	16	33/33	23/25	92.00%	102
19.	R. Longwell/MIN	16	27/28	21/25	84.00%	90
20.	M. Nugent/NYJ	16	34/35	24/27	88.90%	106
21.	O. Mare/MIA	16	22/22	26/36	72.20%	100
22.	M. Bryant/TB	16	22/23	17/22	77.30%	73
23.	S. Gostkowski/NE	16	43/44	20/26	76.90%	103
24.	L. Tynes/KC	16	35/36	24/31	77.40%	107
25.	M. Gramatica/DAL	8	23/23	7/9	77.80%	44







Johnson: Larry Smith; Gore, Jackson, Rackers: Peter Brouillet; Graham: Brian Tietz/US Presswire; Westbrook: Steve Moore

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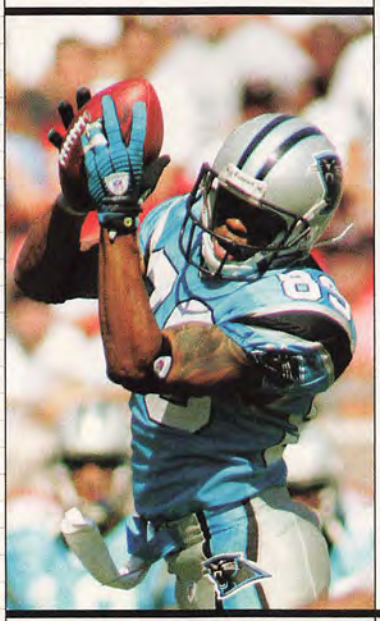
FANTASY STATS

WIDE RECEIVERS

	Player	Games Played	No. Rec	Rec. Yds	Total TDs
1.	S. Smith/CAR	14	83	1,166	9
2.	T. Owens/DAL	16	85	1,180	13
3.	M. Harrison/IND	16	95	1,366	12
4.	C. Johnson/CIN	16	87	1,370	7
5.	T. Holt/STL	16	93	1,188	10
6.	L. Evans/BUF	16	82	1,291	8
7.	R. Williams/DET	16	82	1,310	7
8.	R. Wayne/IND	16	86	1,310	9
9.	A. Boldin/ARZ	16	83	1,203	4
10.	L. Fitzgerald/ARZ	13	68	941	6
11.	T. Houshmandzadeh/CIN	14	90	1,081	9
12.	D. Driver/GB	16	91	1,288	8
13.	R. Moss/OAK	13	42	553	3
14.	M. Colston/NO	14	70	1,038	8
15.	P. Burress/NYG	15	63	988	10
16.	R. Brown/PHI	16	47	836	9
17.	J. Walker/DEN	16	69	1,084	9
18.	H. Ward/PIT	14	74	975	6
19.	V. Jackson/SD	16	27	453	6
20.	D. Branch/SEA	14	53	725	4
21.	C. Johnson/DET (ROOKIE)				
22.	D. Jackson/SEA	13	63	956	10
23.	A. Johnson/HOU	16	103	1,147	5
24.	L. Coles/NYJ	16	91	1098	6
25.	C. Chambers/MIA	16	59	677	4
26.	D. Stallworth/NE	12	38	725	5
27.	J. Galloway/TB	16	62	1,057	7
28.	S. Moss/WAS	14	55	790	6
29.	T. Glenn/DAL	16	70	1,047	6
30.	M. Clayton/BAL	16	67	939	5
31.	B. Berrian/CHI	15	51	775	6
32.	B. Edwards/CLE	16	60	879	6
33.	G. Jennings/GB	14	45	632	3
34.	J. Cotchery/NYJ	16	82	961	6
35.	S. Holmes/PIT	16	49	824	3
36.	I. Bruce/STL	16	74	1,098	3
37.	J. Horn/ATL	10	37	679	4
38.	M. Muhammad/CHI	16	60	863	5
39.	E. Kennison/KC	16	53	860	5
40.	R. Curry/OAK	16	62	727	1
41.	K. Curtis/PHI	16	39	469	4
42.	D. Mason/BAL	16	68	750	2
43.	M. Jones/JAX	14	41	643	4
44.	D. Henderson/NO	13	32	745	6
45.	J. Porter/OAK	4	1	17	0
46.	D. Hackett/SEA	14	45	610	4
47.	B. Jones/TEN	16	27	384	4
48.	M. Jenkins/ATL	16	39	436	7
49.	B. Marshall/DEN	15	20	309	2
50.	R. Williams/JAX	16	53	615	4

TIGHT ENDS

	Player	Played Games	Started Games	Rec No.	Yds Rec.	TDs Rec
1.	A. Gates/SD	16	16	71	924	9
2.	J. Shockey/NYG	15	15	66	623	7
3.	T. Gonzalez/KC	15	15	73	900	5
4.	K. Winslow/CLE	16	16	89	875	3
5.	C. Cooley/WAS	16	16	57	734	6
6.	A. Crumpler/ATL	16	16	56	780	8
7.	T. Heap/BAL	16	16	73	765	6
8.	J. Witten/DAL	16	15	64	754	1
9.	V. Davis/SF	10	8	20	265	3
10.	B. Watson/NE	13	13	49	645	3
11.	L. Smith/PHL	16	15	50	611	5
12.	D. Clark/CHI	16	16	45	626	6
13.	T. Scheffler/DEN	13	5	18	286	4
14.	R. McMichael/MIA	16	16	62	640	3
15.	E. Johnson/SF	13	9	34	292	2
16.	H. Miller/PIT	16	16	34	393	5
17.	O. Daniels/HOU	14	12	34	350	5
18.	B. Troupe/TEN	10	9	13	150	2
19.	Greg Olsen/CHI (ROOKIE)					
20.	A. Smith/TB	14	7	35	250	3
21.	D. Clark/IND	12	12	30	367	4
22.	B. Scaife/TEN	14	12	29	370	2
23.	C. Baker/NYJ	16	14	31	300	4
24.	D. Martin/MIA	11	4	21	198	2
25.	B. Franks/GB	16	14	25	232	0



Smith, Owens: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports; Gates: Steve Moore

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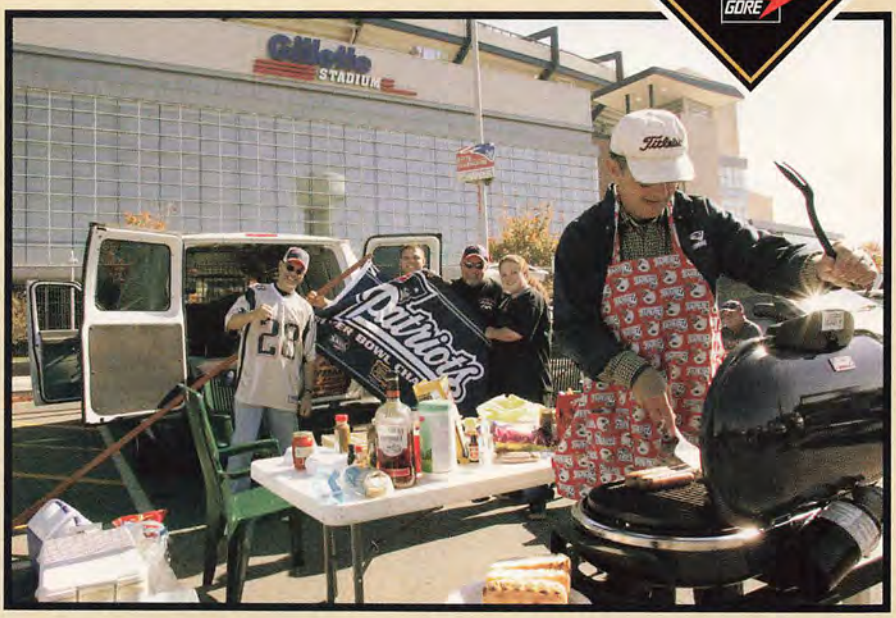

THE STUFF YOU NEED: GRILLS

The basics are simple. Your tailgate party needs something to eat, something to drink, something to sit on, and atmosphere. But it isn't really that simple.

Now that tailgating has become a national pastime, as well as big business, you have a lot of options to sort through and tools to evaluate. While you do need the right tools to tailgate, you don't need to have the biggest rig in the parking lot to throw a great party. Sure, that $3,000 portable kitchen and flatbed living room with plasma TVs are impressive, but you can cook some mean ribs on a charcoal kettle grill and enjoy them sitting in a fold-away canvas chair, too.

Of course the centerpiece of your tailgate party is the food, and a main ingredient is a grill. You'll need one, but what type? For most of us our first decision is a classic one: gas or charcoal.

This battle is really about taste versus convenience. Charcoalers will tell you food is more flavorful off of their grills. They're right. Gas grillers will tell you there's nothing easier at a tailgate party than pushing a button and having your grill ready in just a few minutes. They're right. I can't make that decision for you, but I can help you get the best grill for your needs. Before you head to the store, ask yourself a few questions:

How often will I tailgate? Will I use the grill for only tailgating or for backyard cookouts, too? What's my budget? How important are all those optional features? How many people will I feed and how much cooking space do I need to do that? Will I also smoke foods?

How you answer these questions will help you focus your search on the best grill for you.

Gas grills are popular since they're easy to start and ready to go inside 10 minutes. It's easy to maintain a consistent temperature with gas grills, and if you're using a full-sized propane tank, you don't have to worry much about fuel (a tank will last 20 hours or so).

Gas grills also make it easy to cook at different temperatures at the same time, depending on how many heating elements you have. Be sure to buy one with at least two so you'll be able to use indirect heat for dishes like ribs and beer-butt chicken. Keep in mind, though, that gas grills need a certain amount of flame to stay on, and you won't be able to cook at temperatures lower than 350°–300°F depending on the model you have. More on that when we talk about charcoal and smokers.

When shopping for a portable grill, make sure you can get an adapter for full-sized tanks. Most of them use propane cylinders, which don't last as long, and you'll find yourself swapping them out more than you want.

As for what your grill is made of, stainless steel grills are the most durable and least affected by weather. Another benefit of the material is if the cooking grids, burner units, and other parts are stainless steel they won't rust, they'll clean up easily, and they'll last through several football seasons.

Another good choice is cast aluminum grills. These often come with powder-coated finishes. They retain heat better than stainless steel and usually require less clean-up, too.

The same is true for charcoal grills, which also come in powder-coated steel. Charcoal offers the flexibility of really high heat for searing while allowing you to cook low-and-slow for barbeque.

That goes back to the point about gas vs. charcoal for indirect heat and barbeque. While gas grills don't cook lower than about 300°F, you can easily cook at 200°–250°F with charcoal, which is optimum for the low-and-slow cooking you need to make great barbeque. Cooking with indirect heat is easy, too; just build your fire on one side of the grill.

If you plan on cooking a lot of barbeque or smoked foods you may want to look at buying a smoker instead, or as a second grill. While some can also be used as a regular grill (although they don't have a lot of cooking space), it's the multilevel, slow cooking abilities that make these so popular.

There are two styles of smokers you most often see at tailgate parties: cylindrical water smokers and horizontal smokers.

The water smokers are a great choice if you're just starting out. They're affordable, easy to use, and versatile. Charcoal is the favorite and most common fuel for smokers due to the flavor, but there are gas and electric units that can more easily maintain a consistent temperature. Regardless of the fuel, the use of a water pan placed directly over the heat source means your food will stay moist even after hours and hours of slow cooking.

The most common horizontal smokers, on the other hand, look like two barrels side by side. The smaller one is the firebox where you control how much smoke and hot air it sends into the cooking chamber. You also control how much smoke escapes through a smoke stack attached to the main chamber. These are great units for indirect cooking and a favorite of serious tailgate chefs.

Whichever way you go, be sure the grill or smoker you buy is sturdy, well-supported, and doesn't dent if you lean on it. Also check for a good warranty.

THE STUFF YOU NEED: GRILL ACCESSORIES

Once you've settled on your grill, you need to go shopping for some must-have cooking tools. These are the basics you should toss in a bag or other container and keep with your grill. Then all you have to do is grab it and go.

Tongs are at the top the list, and don't go cheap on these. If they break, you're flipping burgers with your hands over a fire. Not a wise choice. Also, don't be tempted by the short ones. While they take up less space in your bag, they don't keep your hands clear of the heat and flare-ups.

Other grill bag essentials are at least two spoons, one slotted, the other not; two spatulas; a couple of forks (and I don't mean the

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plastic ones you're eating with); a basting brush; a tasting spoon; an instant read thermometer; and at least two knives.

A couple of notes about those knives. First, they should be sharp. Second, they should be used by only the cook. Don't share knives between the food prep area and the bar. If you're cutting limes with the same knife that just cut up that chicken you're going to have cross-contamination issues and sick tailgaters. Along the same line have at least two cutting boards — three if you want one for the bar. Use one for raw meat and the second for other foods. It's that cross-contamination thing again.

Include with your cooking tools a pot, a sauce pan, and two skillets or fry pans — an 8-inch and a 12-inch are good choices. Do this even if you don't have a side burner on your grill. Heat is heat whether it's from a burner or a flame, so don't be afraid to use pots and pans on the grill and expand your menu beyond the usual grilled foods.

Round out your kit with a grill brush, a couple of aprons, and plenty of towels. You can't have too many towels, and remember to use a different, clean towel after you've washed up from handling raw meats.

With the basics out of the way you can spend some time thinking about some of the extras that will help you grow from a griller to tailgate chef. Although these are not necessities, they will make your day in the parking lot easier and help you impress your friends with your culinary skills.

If you plan on cooking kabobs — a great tailgate dish — then you'll want to get some skewers or a kabob basket. Skewers come in wood and metal. If you use wooden ones, be sure to soak them in water or they'll burn up on the grill. Actually, they may anyway; it's not uncommon for soaking alone not to be enough. To avoid this, wrap the exposed parts of the skewers in foil to prevent flare-ups.

If you want to avoid this issue entirely then you can use metal skewers, but be sure to use a towel or hot pad when taking them off the grill — they get hot.

Kabob baskets are another solution, and they prevent pieces from falling into the fire. You just line up your ingredients, close the lid, and place it on the grill. The ingredients stay in place when flipping, too.

One last accessory that allows for an impressive tailgate menu is a rotisserie. You can cook any number of things on a rotisserie, but chicken is a popular tailgate choice. But a rotisserie necessitates another discussion — the generator. Unless you want to stand by your grill turning a hand-crank version for an hour or so, you'll want to have a motorized model, and that means electricity. Before buying one think about how much stuff you want to power. Honda makes a great little tailgate generator — the EU1000i — that is light (29 pounds) and runs about 8 hours on a tank of gas. It's quiet and is plenty of power for your rotisserie, a TV, radio, fan, blenders, etc.

THE STUFF YOU NEED: TAILGATE BASICS

Of course, your tailgate party needs more than stuff to cook with. You need storage, places to sit, and shelter.

Your primary storage is, of course, the cooler. What type of cooler you get depends on space in the car and how much food and drinks you want to have. A good rule of thumb is to get as big or as many coolers as you can take with you. You will find things to fill them up; trust me. If at all possible take at least two coolers so you can pack raw meats and similar items in one and the rest of your food and drinks in the other to avoid cross-contamination.

It's also best to pack your coolers with ice blocks or ice packs of some sort rather than loose ice. Why? Because loose ice melts faster.

One trick many tailgaters use is to fill an empty milk jug with water and freeze it. On game day it serves as an ice pack for the cooler and once the ice does melt you have drinking water. When packing your cooler, pre-cool drinks and other items before packing and load the cooler as full as possible; it stays colder longer full than partially filled.

You can also use your coolers to keep hot foods warm. Insulation works both ways, after all. For best results line the cooler with towels, place the warmed dishes on them, and then fill up the rest of the cooler with more towels so you don't have empty space inside.

Tables are another essential for your parking lot party, and one is not enough. The cook should have his own table, and you can never have too much flat space for your buffet and bar. Make sure all of your tables have locking mechanisms for the legs so they don't collapse from the weight of your food or your buddy Paul, who decides to impress your guests with his table dance.

If you have an unused hitch on your vehicle you can attach a Sports Fan Tailgate Table to it for table space. This handy table attaches to the hitch of your vehicle and travels locked-down outside. At your tailgate party you can set it up for dining or bar height.

Fold-away picnic table sets are a great option, too, because they're portable and take care of both table and seating issues.

Seating is something else it's hard to have too much of. While tailgate parties are not usually sit-down dinners, your guests will be hanging out for a while and will want to take a load off. You can use anything from camp stools and collapsible chairs to new items like fold-out benches and seats that attach to the hitch of your vehicle.

Shelter is another good thing to have at your tailgate party. In addition to providing shade from the sun and dryness from the rain, it helps put a structure to your tailgate space. They're also great for attaching decorations, flags, and other items that create a festive atmosphere and make your tailgate stand out in the parking lot.

Probably the most popular tent at tailgate parties across the country is the E-Z UP Instant Shelter. They take just a few seconds to set up and come in a number of sizes, although their best-selling tent is the 10' x 10' model. For a few extra bucks you can add sides, screens, even rain gutters.

Tailgating recipes and traditions from Stephen Linn and excerpted from his new books, the FOX Sports Tailgating Handbook and The Ultimate Tailgater conference handbooks for the SEC, ACC, Big Ten, Big 12 and Pac-10 (Globe Pequot). Stephen is also the host of The Ultimate Tailgater shows and vice president of the American Tailgaters Association. For more tailgating tips, recipes, videos and podcasts visit theultimatetailgater.com.

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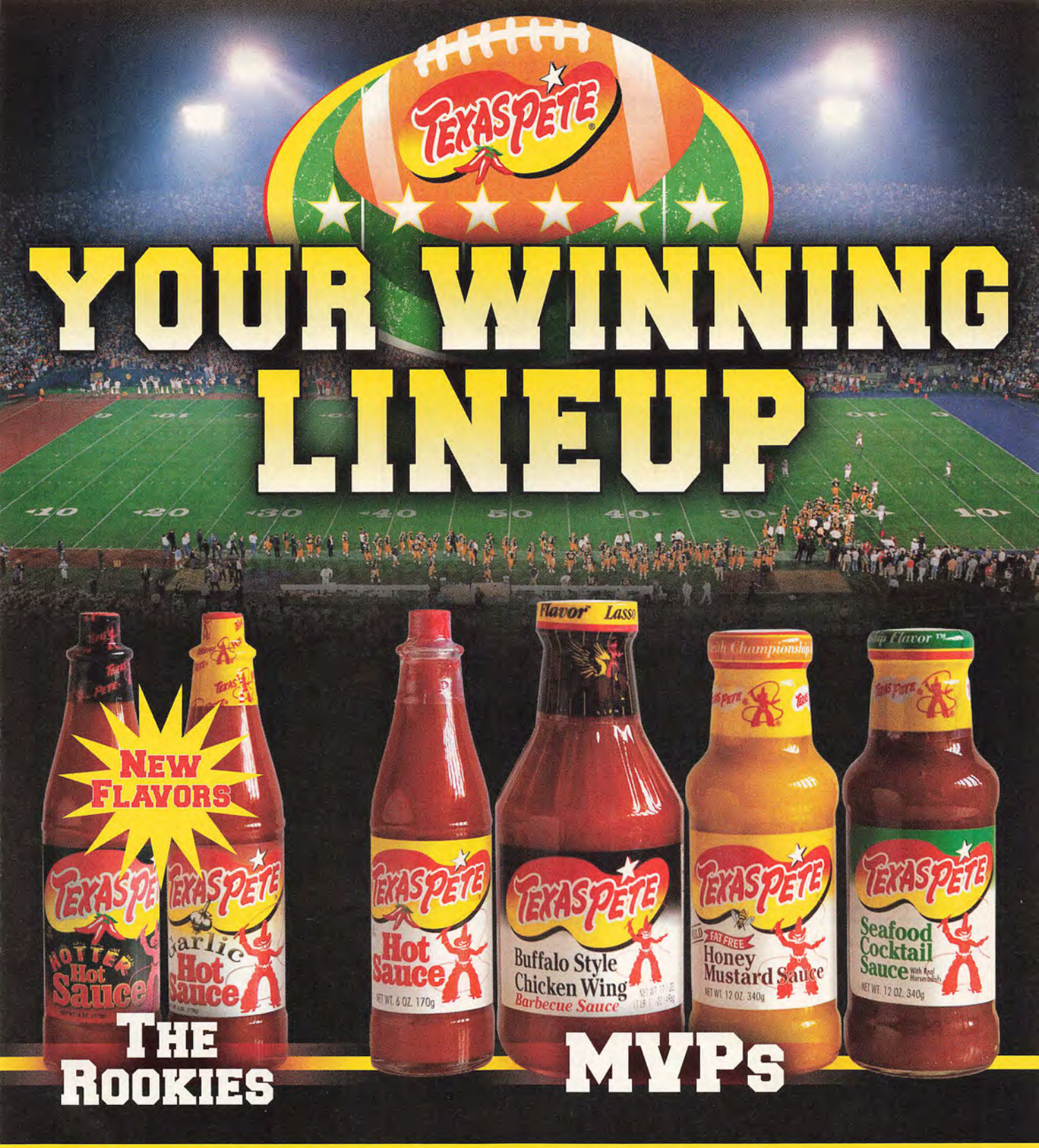

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VIETTI LAYERED CHILI DIP

Vietti SINCE 1898

»Prep: 10 min. »Cook: 25 min.
» 2 cans of your favorite Vietti Chili
» 1 bag Corn Chips
» 1 jar Salsa
» 1 small carton Sour Cream
» Chopped Tomatoes & Cilantro Leaves for Topping

Sprinkle a layer of crushed corn chips on the bottom of a bowl. Top with 1 can of heated Vietti Chili. Spread 1/2 of the guacamole over the Vietti Chili. Add 1/2 of the salsa over the previous layer, spreading each layer out to the edges of the bowl. Repeat layer. Top final layer with corn chips, fresh tomatoes & cilantro.

SPICY CHIPOTLE LIME DIP

Serves: 8 Prep Time: 5 min.

» ½ cup light mayonnaise
» ½ cup light sour cream
» 2 Tbsp. MRS. DASH® Southwest Chipotle Seasoning Blend
» 1 lime, zest and juice

1. Combine all ingredients together in medium bowl until smooth and creamy.

2. Refrigerate covered for at least an hour before serving with fresh vegetables, crackers or tortilla chips.

An easy and tasty low-sodium and low-carb dip that travels well!

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CHICAGO STYLE SMOKED SAUSAGE

» 1/3 cup ketchup
» 1/4 cup chopped pepper
» 2 tablespoons pickle relish
» 2 tablespoons chopped onion
» 1/4 teaspoon poppy seeds
» 4 Bigger Than The Bun Smoked Sausages
» 4 hot dog buns – split

In a small bowl combine ketchup, peppers, relish, onion, and poppy seeds. Cover and chill up to 3 days.

To grill by direct head method: Grill smoked sausage on an uncovered grill directly over medium coals for 8 minutes.

Turn smoked sausage and brush with some of the ketchup mixture. Grill for 6-8 minutes more or until heated through.

To serve, toast cut sides of buns on grill. Serve smoked sausage in the buns and top each with remaining ketchup mixture.

TEXAS PETE® HOTTER HOT WINGS

TEXAS PETE

» 2½ pounds (12 – 15) whole chicken wings
» 3 tablespoons TEXAS PETE® HOTTER HOT SAUCE
» 2 tablespoons butter or margarine

Cut whole wings at joints and discard wing tips. Place the pieces on absorbent paper to dry. To cook, choose one of the following methods:

1. DEEP FRY at 375 degrees for 10–12 minutes or until crispy
2. OVEN BAKE at 450 degrees for 35 minutes or until done

Melt 2 tablespoons of butter or margarine in a sauce pan, add 3 tablespoons of TEXAS PETE® HOTTER HOT SAUCE and stir well. To coat, place cooked wings and blended sauce in a large covered bowl. Shake gently. Serve with celery sticks and blue cheese dressing.

"Before I met you I thought
no salt meant no action,"
flirted the kabob.

"You make me blush,"
said Mrs. Dash.

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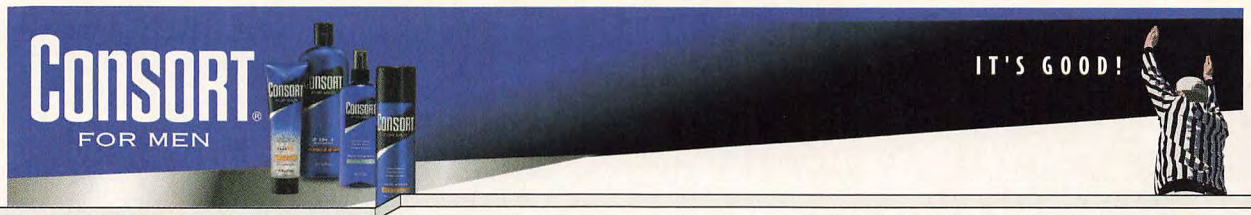

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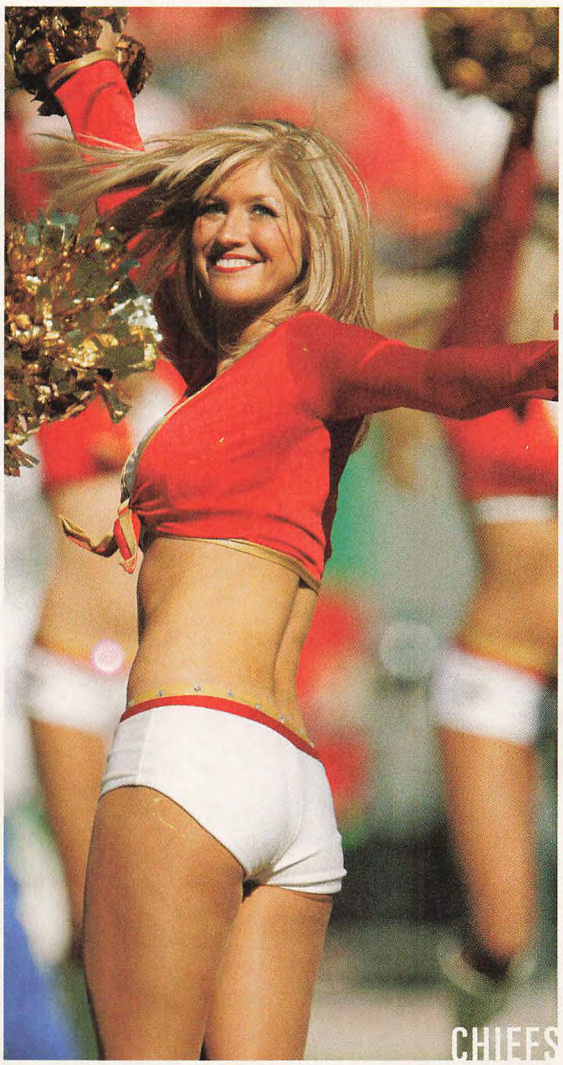

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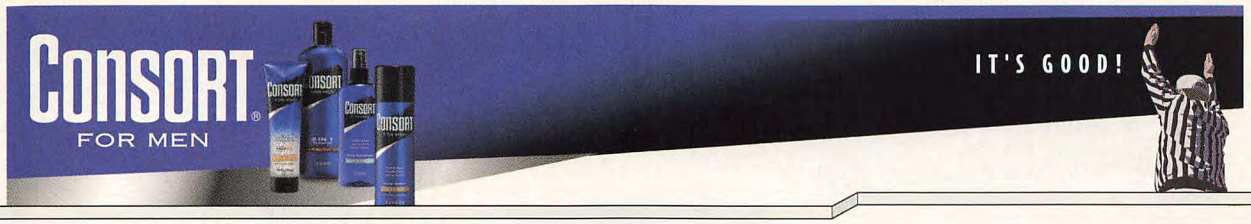

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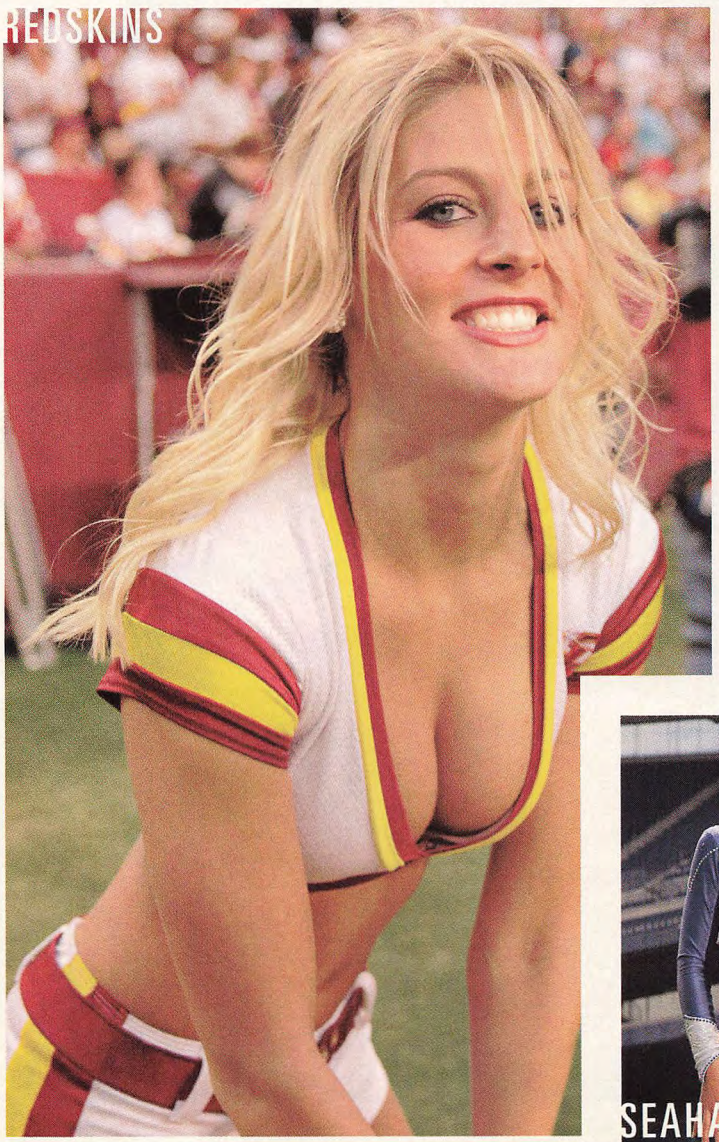
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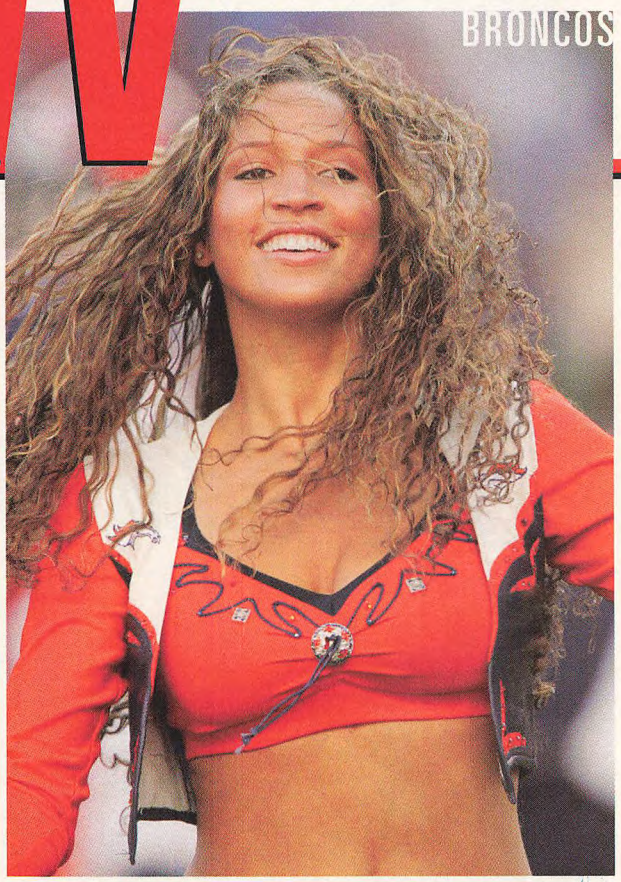
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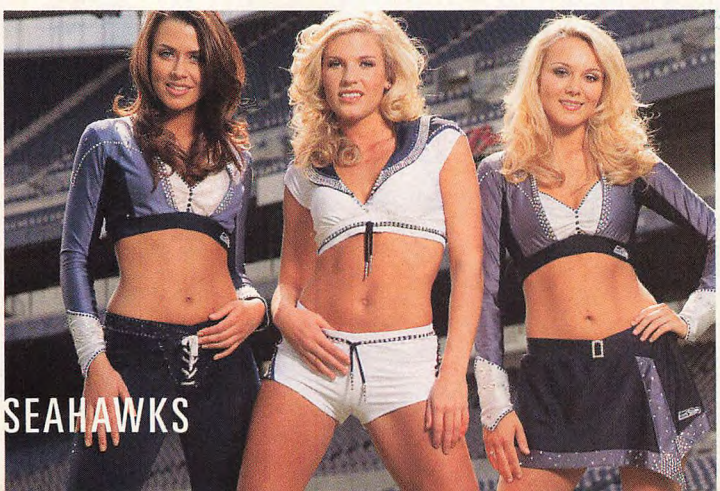
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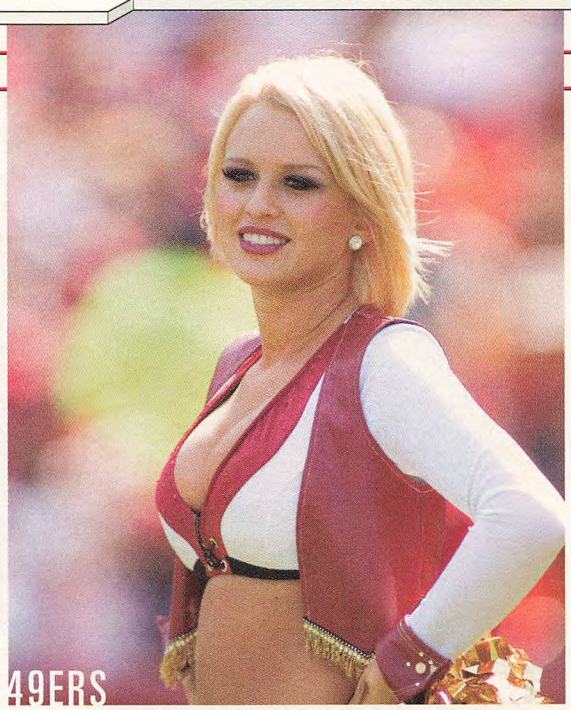
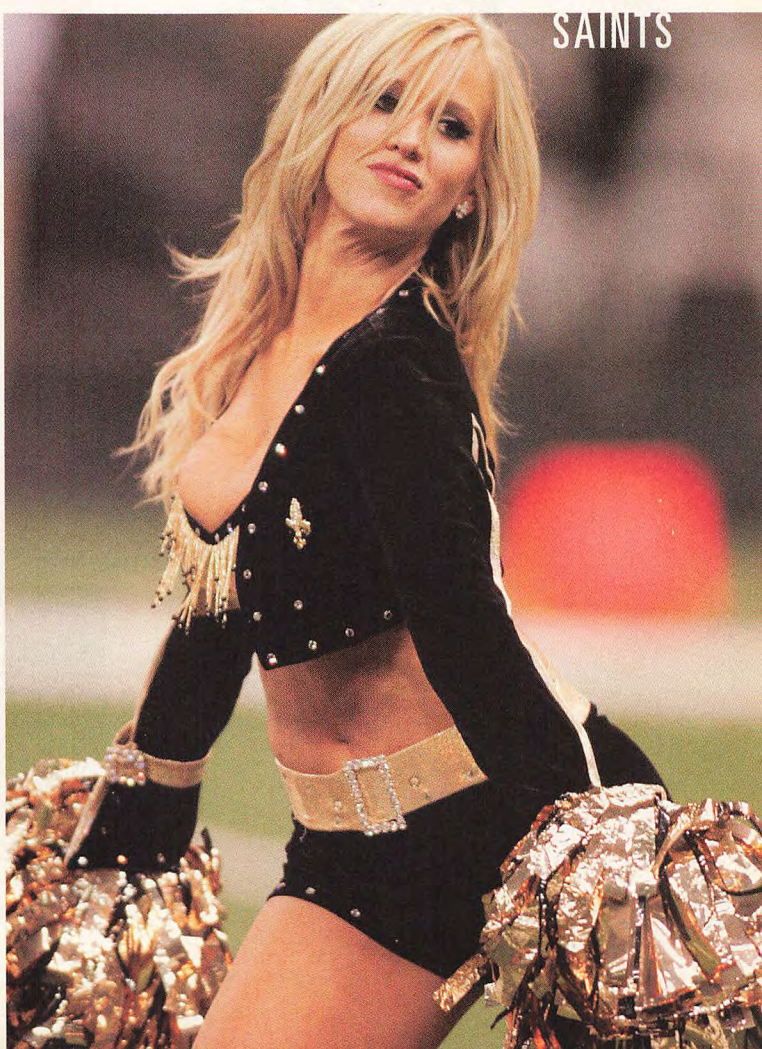
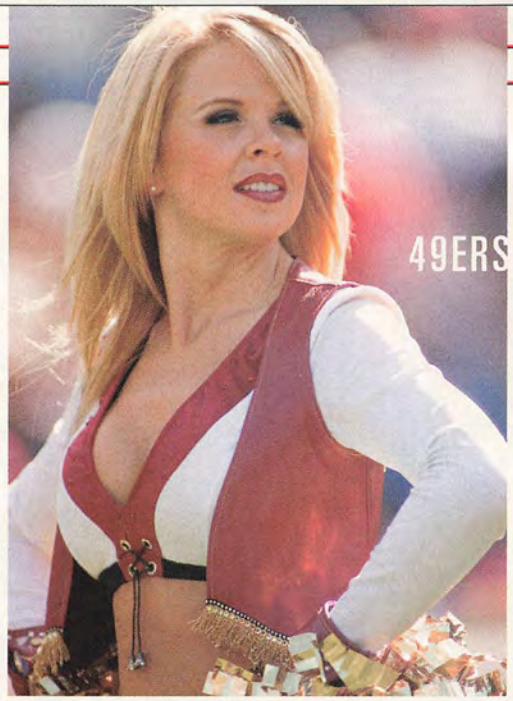




Cincinnati: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports; San Francisco: peter Brouillet; New Orleans: Scott Boehm/Getty Images

SIDELINE SHOW

BRONCOS


49ERS

RAVENS

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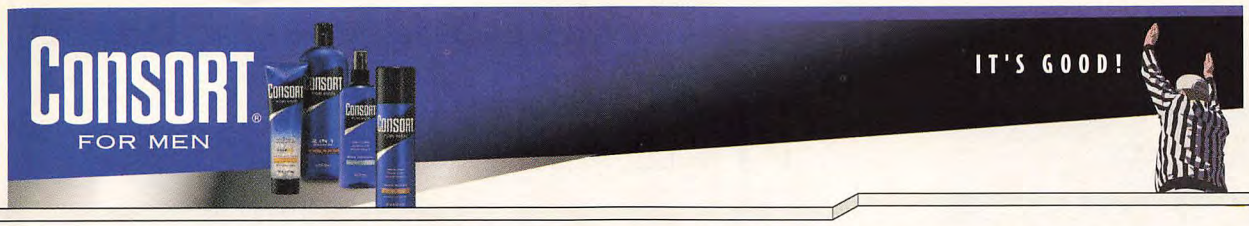

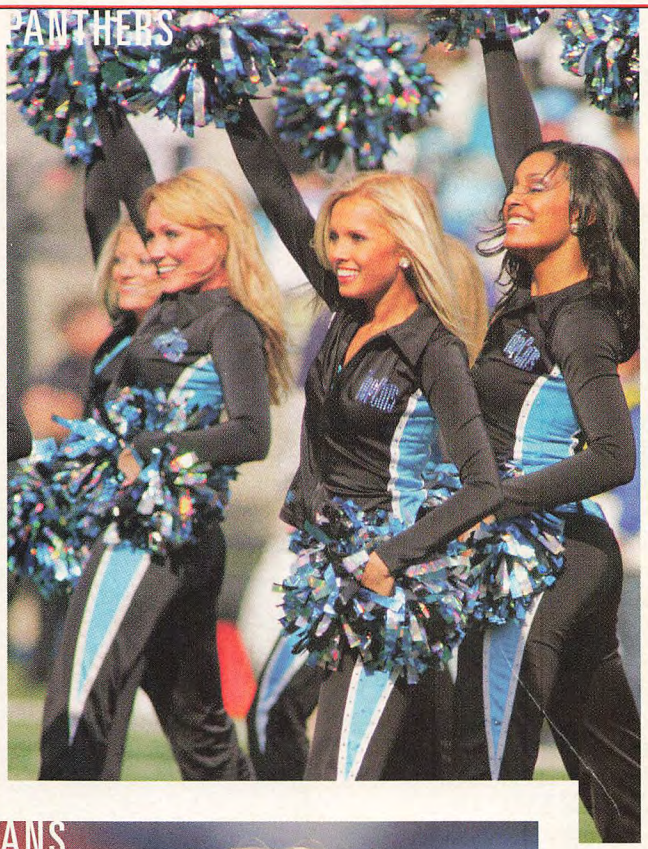

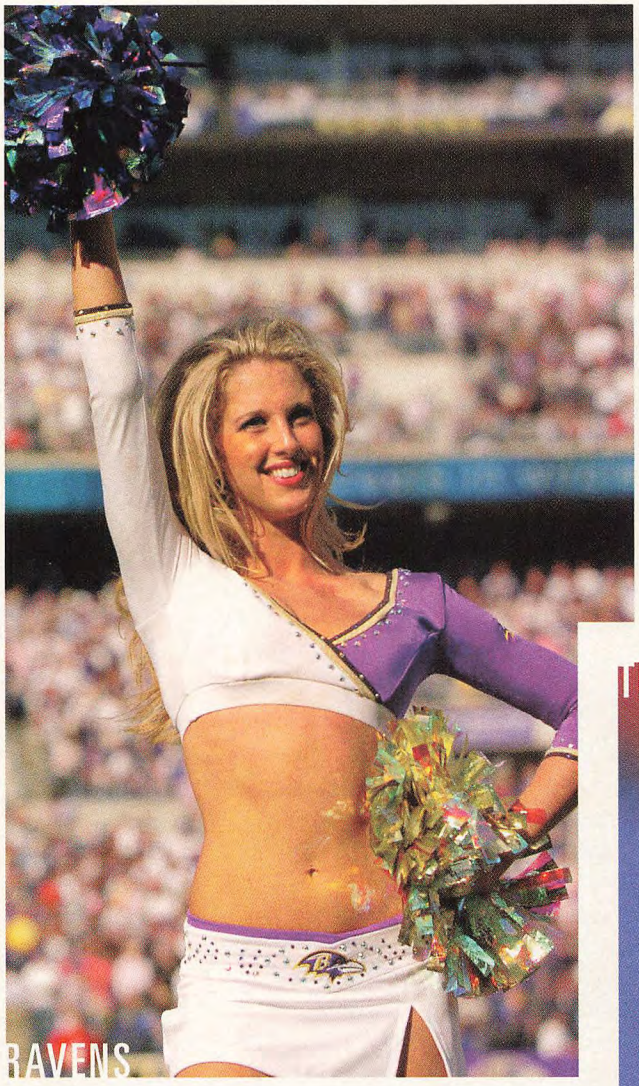

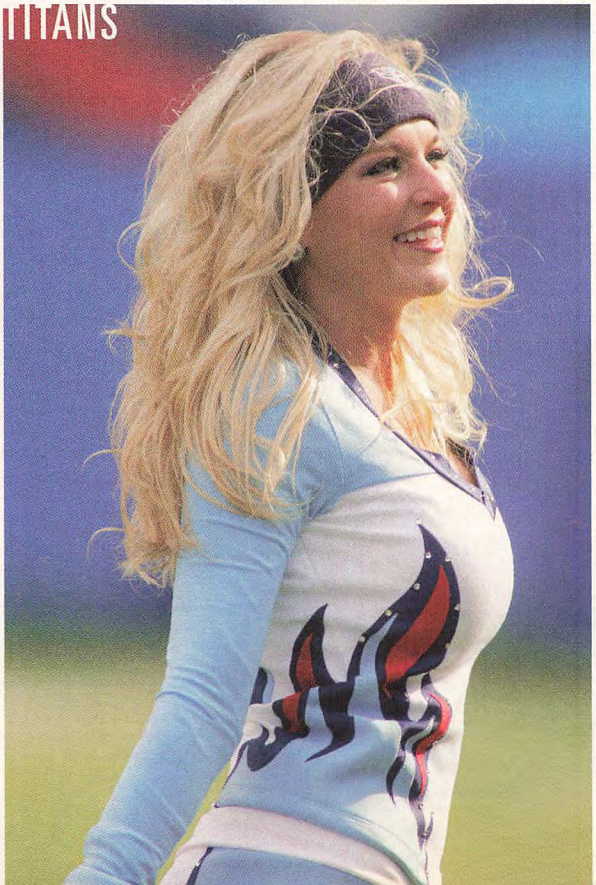

Baltimore: Joe Robbins/Getty Images; Carolina: Al Kooistra; Tennessee: Tim Clark/Athlon Sports

THE BACK PAGE

From the 1966 Green Bay Packers to the 2006 Indianapolis Colts, there have been 41 Super Bowl champions. But from Bart Starr to Peyton Manning, there have been only 26 different quarterbacks to raise the Vince Lombardi Trophy. Of the Super Bowl winning signal-callers, nine won multiple titles. Joe Montana (4), Terry Bradshaw (4), Tom Brady (3), Troy Aikman (3), John Elway (2), Jim Plunkett (2), Roger Staubach (2), Bob Griese (2) and Starr (2) combined to win 24 Super Bowls. Five passers — Manning, Elway, Aikman, Bradshaw and Plunkett — were drafted No. 1 overall and combined to win 12 rings, while five schools — Notre Dame, Alabama, Stanford, Purdue and BYU — have produced 11 quarterbacks who have won a combined 18 Super Bowls. On the other end of the spectrum, the Buccaneers have drafted three eventual champs — Doug Williams, Steve Young and Trent Dilfer — none of whom brought a title to Tampa Bay. In fact, 10 of the 26 championship quarterbacks won it all with a franchise other than the team that originally drafted them.

The chart on the right is a breakdown of every Super Bowl winning quarterback, from Super Bowl I to XLI.

Starr: Tony Tomsic/US Presswire; Manning: Matthew Emmons/ US Presswire

Super Bowl	Winning QB	SB Team	Drafted By (Year)	Pick	College
XLI	Peyton Manning	Colts	Colts (1998)	1	Tennessee
XL	Ben Roethlisberger	Steelers	Steelers (2004)	11	Miami (Ohio)
XXXVIX	Tom Brady	Patriots	Patriots (2000)	199	Michigan
XXXVIII	Tom Brady	Patriots	Patriots (2000)	199	Michigan
XXXVII	Brad Johnson	Buccaneers	Vikings (1992)	227	Florida State
XXXVI	Tom Brady	Patriots	Patriots (2000)	199	Michigan
XXXV	Trent Dilfer	Ravens	Buccaneers (1994)	6	Fresno State
XXXIV	Kurt Warner	Rams	Undrafted	—	Northern Iowa
XXXIII	John Elway	Broncos	Colts (1983)	1	Stanford
XXXII	John Elway	Broncos	Colts (1983)	1	Stanford
XXXI	Brett Favre	Packers	Falcons (1991)	33	Southern Miss
XXX	Troy Aikman	Cowboys	Cowboys (1989)	1	UCLA
XXIX	Steve Young	49ers	Buccaneers (1984)	*	BYU
XXVIII	Troy Aikman	Cowboys	Cowboys (1989)	1	UCLA
XXVII	Troy Aikman	Cowboys	Cowboys (1989)	1	UCLA
XXVI	Mark Rypien	Redskins	Redskins (1986)	146	Washington State
XXV	Jeff Hostetler	Giants	Giants (1984)	59	West Virginia
XXIV	Joe Montana	49ers	49ers (1979)	82	Notre Dame
XXIII	Joe Montana	49ers	49ers (1979)	82	Notre Dame
XXII	Doug Williams	Redskins	Buccaneers (1978)	17	Grambling State
XXI	Phil Simms	Giants	Giants (1979)	7	Morehead State
XX	Jim McMahon	Bears	Bears (1982)	5	BYU
XIX	Joe Montana	49ers	49ers (1979)	82	Notre Dame
XVIII	Jim Plunkett	Raiders	Patriots (1971)	1	Stanford
XVII	Joe Theismann	Redskins	Dolphins (1971)	99#	Notre Dame
XVI	Joe Montana	49ers	49ers (1979)	82	Notre Dame
XV	Jim Plunkett	Raiders	Patriots (1971)	1	Stanford
XIV	Terry Bradshaw	Steelers	Steelers (1970)	1	Louisiana Tech
XIII	Terry Bradshaw	Steelers	Steelers (1970)	1	Louisiana Tech
XII	Roger Staubach	Cowboys	Cowboys (1964)	129	Navy
XI	Ken Stabler	Raiders	Raiders (1968)	52	Alabama
X	Terry Bradshaw	Steelers	Steelers (1970)	1	Louisiana Tech
IX	Terry Bradshaw	Steelers	Steelers (1970)	1	Louisiana Tech
VIII	Bob Griese	Dolphins	Dolphins (1967)	4	Purdue
VII	Bob Griese	Dolphins	Dolphins (1967)	4	Purdue
VI	Roger Staubach	Cowboys	Cowboys (1964)	129	Navy
V	Johnny Unitas	Colts	Steelers (1955)	102	Louisville
IV	Len Dawson	Chiefs	Steelers (1957)	5	Purdue
III	Joe Namath	Jets	Jets (1965)	2$	Alabama
II	Bart Starr	Packers	Packers (1956)	200	Alabama
I	Bart Starr	Packers	Packers (1956)	200	Alabama

* Steve Young was selected by Tampa Bay with the first pick of the 1984 Supplemental Draft after beginning his career with the USFL's Los Angeles Express.
# Joe Theismann was drafted by the NFL's Miami Dolphins and MLB's Minnesota Twins in 1971 but opted to sign with the CFL's Toronto Argonauts.
$ Joe Namath was selected by the Jets at No. 2 overall in the 1965 AFL Draft and by the St. Louis Cardinals at No. 12 overall in the NFL Draft. The combined NFL-AFL Draft began in 1967.

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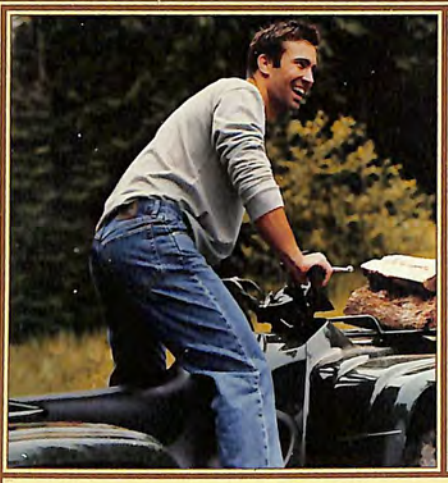

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